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THE BLUE STRING AND OTHER SKETCHES

BY
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AND "MEMORIES"



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CONTENTS

	PAGE
THE BLUE STRING	3
LILY LEE	11
LITTLE THINGS	21
ASHES	29
THE COTTAGE DOOR	35
THE SATYR	43
THE SUBCONSCIOUS ENTANGLEMENT . . .	51
THE LAST SUMMER	69
THE HUGUENOT	79
THE NOVENA	105
THE DAWN	123
THE ARTIST AND THE MATERIALIST . . .	135

THE BLUE STRING

THE BLUE STRING

THE busy hour of six. The subway was crowded. People jostled each other, making grim faces as they looked about with expressions of fatigue, bitterness and disgust. Across from me was a strangely unique face, the only one in the car that looked pretty, yet it was a sad prettiness of wistfulness and longing.

She looked about as though partially unconscious of her surroundings, glaring up at the sordid advertisements over the windows, yet not seeming to read them. Her eyes glanced about, as though in a reverie. She had a strange blue bag in her hand which she handled incessantly. It was broken, the ribbon or string had come out and was tied clumsily around the top of the purse. There was something grotesque in the way it was

tied: something grimly suggestive of poverty. Once or twice she opened it, untying it and re-tying it as a peddler does his pack—those country peddlers who carry small bundles tied with a rope or cord made of handkerchiefs. There is a peculiar something about the expression of these poor people, when they open their packs. As a rule they are tired for they have traveled a long and dusty road and their hearts are sad. Half daring to hope, they slowly open their pathetic little bundles, uttering a few words mechanically. They are very different from their fellow tradesmen of the city.

At the station we got out and, after a few minutes, I found her standing beside me in the elevator of my apartment house. "It is cold to-day," I said pleasantly. I just had to speak to her somehow. "Yes, thank you," she answered plaintively, and as I got out and went into my rooms I wondered why she said, "Thank you." She seemed to understand English perfectly, and I was sure she understood me. Perhaps she did not hear me, I thought. . . .

I had quite forgotten her when, several

weeks afterward, the superintendent knocked and asked for a subscription for the young lady upstairs. "What young lady?" I asked, looking at his list of contributions. "Perhaps you will come up, madam," he said. "She is alone and the Priest thinks that she is dying. She is alone!"

"I will come," I said hurriedly, and quickly walked towards the elevator.

In a second I found myself standing at the door of the girl I had seen in the subway. As I entered there was an aroma of something sweet. . . . It was incense.

I stopped abruptly as I caught a glimpse of the white face turned towards the door. There were two huge candles and some holy water beside her in which she mechanically dipped her fingers slowly, pathetically, bathing her throat as though in pain.

The little room was bleak. There was only one window, scarcely large enough for the sun to shine through, a chair, a lot of music, a violin, and one painting. I think it was the only good thing in the room. A little clock fairly shrieked out each minute and a kettle boiled noisily. The Priest mumbled

a prayer in Latin, which sounded more like a death sentence than a benediction. I waited for him to cease, and, when he did, I walked noiselessly toward him and whispered, "What is it, Father? Can I do anything; can I help?"

"No, my child, it is too late, she is dying now. She has starved to death."

"Starved?" I said. "How strange, how unusual, it is impossible!"

"Oh, no, it is quite usual! It is possible," answered the Priest. "Only you don't see it, or, if you do, perhaps you give it a more agreeable name. You call it anemia, or something else. Often these poor girls die from lack of nourishment; the system becomes weakened and then they waste away or contract a disease, which results in this."

"Oh, Father!" I gasped, "I never realized it before. What a hideous thing poverty is. It crushes the spirit, wounds the pride, and destroys the body! How grim it is! Was there no help for her?"

"Oh, yes," said the Priest, "but not at the time when it would have mattered. It is often so. Help comes just a moment too late. See

now, there are three of us here, willing and glad to help, but the tired soul is breaking its bonds, swiftly, eagerly; this child longs for rest, for the sweet peace of oblivion, or for the rare music of Paradise.

“In a few minutes, if she smiles, you will know that death is near, for she will greet it that way, with a smile, not of bitterness, but of recognition and gladness; they all go this way, her kind. . . . I know them better than the physician, for I stay until the *end* and I know the signs. I know these poor little lotus flowers, how they bloom and then fade, sinking into the cool waters of annihilation. . . .”

“Is she smiling yet?”

“No,” I said, “she looks troubled. See how the holy water drops from her fingers, and her black hair, how it falls so listlessly, so pensively, on the pillow, and her blue eyes, how sad they have become!”

“Has she said anything?”

“I cannot hear . . . she whispers so. . . . Look, Father, she smiles, but there are tears on her lashes!”

“Yes, my child, the Angels smile that way. . . .”

As he uttered these words I looked down upon the floor, and as I did I leaned forward and picked up that strange little purse, tied with the frightful blue string. . . .

LILY LEE

LILY LEE

"God grows weary of great kingdoms but never of little flowers."

THERE is a beautiful painting by Greuze called, "The Broken Pitcher." A painting of a young girl standing with a broken pitcher in her arms, enveloped in pastel shades of soft blue, lavender and gray. So fittingly does it resemble Lily Lee in color, expression and personality; for Lily Lee was young, beautiful and pensive, mentally holding a "broken pitcher" in her arms, always puzzled, wondering, hoping, bewildered by the cold hands of Fate—a relentless Fate that had crushed and shattered her happiness in its zenith when a wonderful morning was just passing into the arms of the open day.

Albert was her lover—her lover in the old-fashioned Spanish way, where lovers peeped

through iron bars and sang soft lyrics to lovely ladies, where love, chivalry and reverence were one, when "Knighthood was in Flower."

Lily Lee loved Albert, the dark-eyed Latin, and he loved Lily Lee.

One night, when the wind was shrieking—the rain beating upon the windows—the lightning tearing the sky,—a man knocked faintly upon her door. Taking a candle and walking slowly down the long stairway, her hair falling, her dark eyes serene in their great depths, she slowly opened the door and gazed into the eyes of Albert.

"He has shot me," he said and fell upon the step.

There was no crying out—no excitement—no call for help. Slowly, calmly, she put the candle down by his head, threw her strong arms about him and held him close to her heart until a heavy step was heard. A burly form thrust its head into the open door and said—"Come with me!"

"He is dead," answered Lily Lee, her voice still calm and steady. "Please go away, *he is dead!*"

An hour passed—two hours—four hours and still she sat motionless, whispering the love of her soul into deaf ears—kissing her lover's eyes and hair until her father led her away.

Gently they laid her in her quaint little bed underneath the pink and gold canopy of old silk, the rose lights throwing soft shadows over the still white face. There was no weeping, no noisy demonstration of grief, no plea for sympathy—no word of regret or bitterness. Just the soft, quiet breathing, the tossing of the tired head to and fro over her little white pillow, and an occasional whisper as though saying to herself, Albert is dead—Albert is dead——

In the distance could be heard the weird sound of a screech owl, the murmur of the crickets—the low moaning of a dog into the black night—the rain beating against the window pane in a measured, relentless rhythm. The father bending over the still bed, the maid crying softly, a doctor fumbling with capsules and stethoscope; testing her heart beats and watching blue shadows darken beneath closed eyes until the gray dawn brought forth the long day——

Hours and hours passed and still Lily Lee remained in this state of semi-consciousness; when gradually she grew better and again went about her duties in the old placid way; caring for the house, nursing the flowers, reading, singing her favorite Schubert songs, writing, riding, doing all the sweet and wholesome things that presented themselves in her quiet sphere. But there was a gentle sadness about her—unselfish, lovable, tender, resigned, with a smile that had more sorrow than gladness and a laugh that had lost its merry ring. Often she stayed alone, making strange little flower beds of pansies and sweet peas; of violets and geraniums, her small hands patting the earth into shape, her brown head almost touching the fresh earth; then a far-away glance, a pensive smile—a grip of the tiny spade and a sinking down upon the ground as though listening to the heart of nature, lost in a reverie of delicate dreams.

She resembled the small flowers she loved in the sense of being so fragile and pure, yet possessing a peculiar resonance of character and depth of soul like these tiny flowers

that, though apparently fragile, have their roots firmly planted in Mother Earth—a divine combination of delicacy and strength.

“Come away,” I said, “come with me to the city.”

“Not to a city,” she said earnestly, “not there.”

“You must come to forget,” I said, “forget your sorrow.”

“Sorrow? I must not forget that. Do you know, my friend,” she continued—“do you know that all I learned about the Infinite—about nature—about everything—was through my great loss? Love led me up to the Border-Land of the Infinite where I remained merely as a dweller upon the threshold until grief-wild, despairing grief threw me prostrate, humble, into the very heart of revelation. At first it seemed that the threshold was only bleak and silent—and then through desire and faith came the realization of Occult Law.

“I have lived with the Immortals,” she said. “I have read them by day and seen them by night. That something we call the

night, which is in reality the eternal day of things—where silence and love open wide the portals, bringing that music of the spheres which is not a fantastic dream but an exquisite reality. Where souls float into space, free and unhampered, to laugh and sing like merry children at the quaint face of the moon or to climb up to the great Mars, finding the path we wish to find because it is our wishing that determines the route we take in the vast spaces of the Ether. Every path has color, because each sound has its color and when you throw your voice out into the Ether, the echo answers and out springs the color that your desire has called forth.

Sometimes you ascend a path of blue shades—from the faintest blue to the deepest violet. The shadows are all tinted in these shades—the faces you meet are of a corresponding color—the music is that particular quality according to the vibration of your astral body. For instance—when you are enveloped in blue—you hear such things as McDowell's "To a Wild Rose" and "To a Water Lily"—gentle, lyric things. The flowers you see are the wild

flowers—the violet, the narcissus, the jasmine and when you begin thinking in a majestic, virile, commanding way, the scene changes suddenly into vivid purple and gold—the music becomes that of Wagner and Beethoven and the flowers are the stately rose and giant chrysanthemum. The mental illumination is infinite in range where ‘Every thought breaks out a rose.’ ”

“Then,” I said, “you believe that sorrow was, after all, an inspiration?”

“Yes,” she said. “I owe everything to it—all my understanding of the subtle things of life, beauty, nature and infinite love——”

I tried to lure her away from her quiet home and tragic past but she only shook her small head and smiled as though to say, “You seek to give me the world, when you would be taking it from me; my true world of nature where the individual becomes a part of the scheme of things and where life is a privilege and death only Transition; where the dull noise and ceaseless grind of the city is never heard; where unchastity is unknown; where gentle peace and unsullied desire mingle in steadfast repose.”

“I understand,” I said thoughtfully, and said no more. And, as I drove away and caught a last glimpse of her slim little figure bending over her flowers, I thought of the words of that great master—Tagore, “God grows weary of great kingdoms, but never of *little flowers.*”

LITTLE THINGS

LITTLE THINGS

SEEMINGLY the red light had brought the angels in. It created an atmosphere in the small room. . . . It was a little thing. . . . There were hyacinths and narcissus in the window. . . . These too were little things. . . . There was a picture of a baby and a small clock. The clock had a pretty way of striking the hour; it gave a sense of rhythm to the room. There were a few books on the table. . . . These too were little, but what would the room have been without them? . . .

There was a child beneath the window feeding a small canary. There was a strain of music, a soft melody and a woman who knew how to smile. Then came a knock at the door, a man entered and glanced lovingly at the woman. They sat down before the fire, a kettle boiled, and a white kitten

purred. It was all they had, this room. . . .

"What have we for dinner?" said the man.

"It is only a little dinner, but it is good; I have done it myself," said the woman.

"How sweet you are," said the man.

"How splendid you are," said the woman.

"And how wonderful it is, our home; our love has made it so."

"Love makes everything wonderful," said the man. "And how are you, my dear one; are you quite well?"

"Yes, *and perfectly happy*. We have been married for ten years. Why is it that our friends are not so happy as we?"

"Because we are mates," said the man. "Few men and women find the perfect love."

"Why is that?" said the woman.

"They are too hasty, too dull, too arrogant, or merely unfortunate. The perfect love never dies, for it is immortal."

"Yes, I know it is," said the woman. "When I talk to you it is as though all intellectual things were made clear. Our discussions are never arguments, yet they reveal much. Our spiritual meditations resolve into poems where we are lost in rhythm and

song. Our touch is like fire; it is both intense and refined; and our sleep is in Paradise; we drift there in our dreams because the angels the little red light brought take us there. That is why they come. Sometimes I fear it is too beautiful, but I suppose one should never be afraid of beauty; it is the soul of things and should be revered as a guardian.

"I love you," said the woman, impulsively.

"If you do, then call me by that name you alone called me years ago. You say it so tenderly, it is a blessing to me. It is more than that, more than I can tell you. It has a kiss and a prayer in it."

Rising from her chair she stood majestically, her long beautiful arms lifted toward him. She smiled, half playfully, half seriously, and said, "Good-night, dearest. . . ."

"Do not go now, my dear," said the man. "Let us talk for a while. I am thinking of the cottage where we spent so many happy hours. It was the little white gate that impressed me more than anything else. It seemed to be alive, to have personality, and stood as a symbol. It opened the way and

closed out the coldness of the world, leaving only tenderness within."

"Yes," said the woman. "And do you remember our walks? I remember the crickets more clearly than anything else and the perfume of the flowers."

"Yes," said the man. "And I remember when I first met you. It was your smile that I recall so vividly, and the funny little curl at the back of your neck; it seemed to love the whiteness of you, and the night I first kissed you, it was the tear on your lashes that touched my cheek that I remember. That tear seemed to course right into my heart and remained as the tenderness of *you*."

"The day our baby came, I don't remember the tragedy, or the keen joy of it, so much as the pinkness of the room, the rosebuds, the ribbons and the hands that curled over mine, like rose-petals. The night of the storm, I recall the small fishing vessel that was wrecked on the rocks, not the large vessel that sank. The day you read me the fairy stories, it was not so much the exquisite color and the brilliant expression, but the nightingale that sang too sweetly and the result was

that a thorn was thrust into its heart. The day of our wedding, it was the way the sun shone through the window that impressed me most. It seemed to burst through and form a halo about your white gown, a blue and gold light that illumined. Swift fancies darted through my mind, then flew upward to the gods; they were too beautiful to remain on earth, they flew away and nestled in lilies and fine lace, the kind you wore on your head. There was a song, too, that I heard in the breeze; as it moved the trees bowed their heads, the music was too sweet, it eluded them and followed the sunshine, joining in a symphony of violins and flutes. Now the symphony was built on flower-themes and played by children; only the wild flowers were used, for they had the spirit of the woods, of freshness and pure joy. This was the music of nature. There was a theme built on violets and another on jasmine, while the rhythm was of green and tried to overpower and subdue the melody, but each time the flowers eluded the green in a way so subtle that the green formed a shrine for their loveliness through which they smiled and gave out fresh per-

fume. Then I remember the dusk of the evening when we were alone; the world, the day of things was slipping away and the night with its glorious solitude gathered about us. It was the way the lark sang that I remember so clearly. Its little throat seemed to fairly burst with joy while you listened in reverence. It was the way your hand trembled that touched my heart. That, too, was a little thing! . . . And when the servant brought the candle and the kind wind blew it out and the young moon shone so brightly that the waves in your hair broke into dimples and the white of your gown seemed to smile at the night; I knew then why the crescent moon was a messenger, why the night was a revelation and love immortal, and I knew why Christ loved little children. . . . So much was made clear through the medium of small things and now, my dear, when you tell me good-night, the echo of your sweet voice goes out into the Ether and sinks into the heart of an angel—a *little* one, I think! . . .”

ASHES

ASHES

THERE was no intellectual interest between them. The spiritual tie was a faint one because the man thought entirely along material lines. . . .

The woman was not arrogant. She was too wise for that; so the conversation lagged and the silences became more frequent. Now silence is a dangerous thing. It tells you too much. The soul speaks then and the soul never lies. The man thought the woman hypersensitive. He thought her conceited. She was neither hypersensitive nor conceited. Now these were simple things and made no particular difference at first, but later they created a breach. The man was very rude to the woman. She forgave him, she thought—but it killed her respect for him in such a subtle way that the realization came gradu-

ally, so that she was surprised one day to find that a very vital something was dead,—*that something called respect. This made the woman analytical. Why had she loved him? . . .* He had physical and magnetic charm, and a few fine sensibilities. The few fine sensibilities had held her more than the magnetic charm, for the woman was an idealist.

The conversation was generally personal, that is another reason why the love was dying. The woman was intellectual. She loved to talk about impersonal things, especially the beautiful things. She was also a good friend. She was generous and loyal. She liked to see the man happy and prosperous.

His wife was a commonplace woman: one of inferior intelligence. She counted the soap so that the servant could not steal it. This was an index to her character. She was small. She called it practical. They always excuse themselves this way.

The man liked this for he thought the woman extravagant and his wife sensible. When a man likes the wife better than the other woman it is time for the other woman to go—and this she did.

She went away very quietly. There was no tragic parting. No sarcastic speech. It really was not worth while she thought. She just went away, and when she had gone, there was a longing in the man's heart. He was just clever enough to realize that he had lost something big. The woman had faults, of course, but they were big faults. He remembered this reluctantly. It was an ever present fact. It annoyed him.

His wife found him bored and finally he was cross when she counted the soap.

"Why count such a petty thing as soap?" he shrieked at her one day.

"You never minded before," the wife answered in surprise. "You are changed of late."

"Yes," said the man. "I have changed. I have had the companionship of a big woman, one with big virtues and big faults, but there was something patrician about her. Her training was different from ours!"

"We are not common," said the wife. "What do you mean?"

"She had an atmosphere. There was some-

thing royal in her nature. I miss it," he said.

"Why not look for her?" said the wife indifferently.

"She has gone," said the man. "I will never be happy again. She was different from the rest. . . . I shall never be happy again. . . ."

"I guess you won't," said the wife, again mechanically counting the soap. . . .

THE COTTAGE DOOR

THE COTTAGE DOOR

THERE was only one way for the woman to know and this was in her dreams. She had a power like Joan of Arc, only it came to her in the night instead of the day.

Now the woman knew that if she told her friends they would laugh at her, so she climbed to the top of the mountain and told the Buddhist Priest. He could understand. Now, when she got to the top of the mountain, the Priest told her how to find her lover in her dreams. The woman had visions but not always the ones that suited the hour, and her need was very great. "Are you afraid?" said the Priest. He said this because he saw from her face that she was haunted not by imaginative suffering, but the kind that comes from knowledge. She already knew through her

intuition that her lover was false,—still she hoped on.

“Go home and rest. If you do not see to-night, you will in time,” said the Priest. “But be brave; these realizations almost kill the soul.”

The woman left him in a bewildered state. She smiled in a strange way when she said good-bye. The lines around her mouth deepened and seemed to press through the flesh. She put up her hand as though her thoughts were tangible, as if to brush them away. She stumbled a bit as she walked down the mountain, some wild animals scampered about; the sun shone through the tall trees and seemed to suddenly sink into the sea. Love goes that way, too, she thought, as she walked slowly into the dusk. It is so golden, so warm, so bright, and still the cold waters come and take it away; only the sun seems to sink, but the other really goes and then the shadows come and the black night and one is too tired to see the dawn. Perhaps it is better thus, for the day with its brightness would hurt too much. It is well to be a little blind sometimes. . . .

Now the woman dropped off to sleep before she reached her home, for the Priest had told her to sleep under the trees; that the closer she was to nature the more wise she would become. She slept. Her soul traveled far. Time and space were annihilated, but whenever she drew near her lover's door something seemed to send her back. There were people who blocked the way. One of them came up and tied her feet. Another put a handkerchief over her eyes. "What are you doing to me?" she said. "Why do you hurt me so?"

"We are all trying to keep you from going, from seeing that which will tear your heart."

"Who are you?" said the woman.

"We are angels."

"You look like people. But why are you near me?"

"Because you are kind," they said.

"Am I kind?" said the woman. "I did not think of that."

"That is why it is so beautiful," said the wood spirits.

"Let me go now," said the woman. "I must, even if it kills me. So many nights I

have tried to see, but *you* have kept me back. I am nearer now; I see the cottage door! How still everything is and there is no star! . . .”

Walking slowly, the woman entered the little white gate at the roadside. “My lover is here, my lover is here,” she said, as though singing the words, forgetting for the moment that his wife was with him. Turning back, she said to the wood spirits, “I suppose you will leave me now, for you will be shocked. It is a married man whom I love.”

“We are never shocked at love, pure love,” they added tenderly as they clustered about her. “It is so sad, so sad,” said an old woman at her side.

“Oh! is that you, grandmother? Do you know, too? But leave me; I must go in. . . .”

Quietly she walked toward the cottage. The trees threw black shadows around her feet as if to trip her. A dog barked as he felt her presence. A man opened the door suddenly, just as her hand was lifted to pass through. Standing with his arm about a slender figure, he uttered these words, “*Why did you disturb us?*” and shut the door in her face. As he

did this it shut on her soul. It cut deep through to the heart of subconscious life. She did not fall or cry out; she only walked quietly away. Finally the thing began to bleed and then turn an ugly color, and the path had drops of warm blood on it and the pebbles looked like little ghosts as she stepped on them. The white gate suddenly became black and all of the wood spirits had gone. A dew-drop fell from a leaf. She thought it was a tear. The sea murmured in the distance. A lighthouse flashed out a red light. A bird flew across her path. The wind blew the perfume of the roses toward her: the roses that bloomed around the white gate. This made her step a little slower and her thoughts more feeble, the perfume hurt as the door had done and made the soul bleed so that the wind cut the wound deeper as she walked. She walked on and on until she came to the path that lead to her home. All that night she had walked. She said to herself, "I cannot go on, I am too tired; therefore, I must sleep here."

When she awakened she was very old; her face had changed in the night and her hands were blue. "I am so weary, so weary," she

thought. "I must go to the Priest." But before she reached his house her heart stopped. Just before it did the full meaning of those words came to her: "Why did you disturb us?" The word *us* meant unity. The construction of the sentence was a reproach. The slamming of the door was an insult, and thus it was made clear that her rival was the one who was loved, while she was nothing; and this she knew, for she saw it in a dream, not the idle kind, but in God's mystic kingdom where hearts are bared and where souls cannot lie.

Just before her heart stopped she also remembered this: That the woman at her lover's side was not his wife; it was his sister-in-law. And before another thought came she was dead. . . .

How good it was that her heart did not beat any more! . . .

THE SATYR

THE SATYR

THERE are times in a woman's life when she is shipwrecked. She has thrown away brilliant opportunities—she is left without funds and, sometimes, without friends.

Now this happens to beautiful women and it happens to distinguished women. It is more apt to happen to these, because they are more imperious and more indifferent than their less attractive sisters. Sometimes it is because they are idealistic. They will not easily sell their souls for gold. Inferior women will, for they are grasping and materialistic. Often at the crisis a satyr appears, as though sent out from the inferno to haunt beautiful and unfortunate women. Perhaps it is their only chance and the hour of emergency often darkens a woman's perspective. But not so with this woman of

whom I write. She was too refined. I mean refined in the general sense, not only as applied to breeding, but to mind. Now this made her very rare, for, though she knew many women, she did not know many who were symmetrically developed, where there was a combined beauty of a clear mind, an esthetic soul, and a strong character. It was the soul that really dominated this woman. Unlovely things were impossible to her. Immorality was hideous, not because it was unlawful, but because it was vulgar.

I speak of immorality in the larger sense as applied to marriage. Many people marry without love, but it is wrong, and many people do wrong things. A thing cannot be right just because it is a custom, for customs are often created for convenience.

Now this woman, who was unhappy, was living in a cottage immediately by the sea. She was there with her mother. The mother was comparatively young and ill. That is one reason why they lived by the sea. At night the beautiful woman would leave the mother and walk on the beach. Her hair was black, and straight. It generally fell down as she

walked, because it was pinned so listlessly. Her cape hung over her shoulders indifferently. The only definite thing about her was her walk. She fairly marched up and down the sand as though saying, "I can't do it. . . . I won't do it," as she looked in the deep water. "It is impossible. . . ."

"But you must, there is no other way. Your work has failed, your discarded lovers are in the war, . . . and the other, . . . and the old man has so much gold," said her mind. While her Soul kept saying, "*I cannot. . . . I cannot. . . .*"

"You are getting older," whispered the Mind again, "and the suspense is bringing lines in your face. Soon it will be too late. What can you do for your mother then? . . ."

"Why do I live?" said the Soul. "Nothing can atone, can compensate for the torture of his touch! Even Heaven could not do that. It could not take away the scars: his hideous sensual old hands would tear my heart into shreds, each shred would be polluted, distorted, decayed! Nothing could live after his touch. His hands are like the old man's in the 'Tales of Hoffman'—and his eyes are worse

than Svengali's in 'Trilby.' They are the things that kill young women!

"If I walked into the ocean it would be so sweet. There would be no more agony, no more torture, but my mother is calling me now. Why does she always call just at the minute I think of the sea? I wonder if she knows my thoughts. . . . I will go back. . . ."

"It is the same when you return," said her Mind. "Decide what to do. . . ." The woman walked slowly into the house and went upstairs to her room. . . .

The next morning the Doctor came. She did not die. It was not a pretty ending. She was quite mad. Her brain had refused to go on with that endless and futile analysis. The mother went to live with a relative which was another sort of death and the woman went to a sanitarium.

The man whom she called the satyr paid the bills, but she never became reasonable enough to thank him. She only shrieked when he came into the room, and said something about his being half-man and half-animal, and begged the nurse to send him away. To her it was like a visit from the elemental world,

to him she was a beautiful sight, as her hair was still black and her arms still young and soft. Her rebellion piqued him, for he was seventy-two.

The Doctor noticed that she grew more violent when the old man appeared. He wanted the visits stopped but the nurse said that he paid the bills, so he continued to come.

One day she died suddenly. The next day she was to be buried but the satyr asked that she be left there another day. This was so that he could kiss her cold lips. This he did. The nurse wondered if she imagined that the beautiful woman grew whiter as he kissed her. *It was not imagination.*

**THE SUBCONSCIOUS ENTANGLE-
MENT**

THE SUBCONSCIOUS ENTANGLEMENT

THERE was just time enough to catch the steamer; the baggage was aboard and there was no time for change. The vessel was shockingly small; it looked more like a Mississippi steamboat than a ship. The water was dull and muddy, the sailors looked listless, the captain inefficient and the doctor indifferent.

Quickly the ship began to move; we pulled away from the shore and as the realization came that I was really aboard, that I was to be on this terrible looking vessel for a week, my heart sank and I was faint with fear. Rushing past the doctor, I looked at the captain and asked to be let off with the pilot, but I was told, if I did, I would find myself in a marshy swamp full of mosquitoes, forty miles from New Orleans, and that the rope ladder

was no safe thing for a frightened woman. Then I realized that I had to go on that ship to New York, whether I wished to or not. With a terrible feeling of helpless despair I walked along the deck, scanning the faces of my fellow passengers. They appeared to be rather stupid and second class, with the exception of one man whom I believed to be a gentleman. He assured me that the *Creole* was, in spite of its appearance, a perfectly sound ship, that he had traveled on her for years, and that the Southern Pacific steamers were well constructed. After this I felt reassured, but could not speedily recover my spirit. I went to my stateroom where I remained until dinner. Looking out of my window I could see dimly the muddy water, the low banks, the dismal swampland, and hear the orders of the captain. The fog horn blew incessantly.

As we drifted out into the Gulf of Mexico there was a dense fog and a storm gathering and the ugly little "tug-boat" (as I called it) rocked like a cradle. For a few minutes the lightning fairly tore the sky, the usual things happened: nervous women and frightened

children ran about, the wind blew ruthlessly, the foghorn continued its weird sound, the passengers grouped themselves together dolefully; while the rain beat upon the deck in huge drops until the clouds were exhausted. Then a strange sudden calm fell upon us. You could hear a sigh, a whisper, on this warm night, and there was a mysterious "something" in the atmosphere, a horrid feeling of presentiment, of some ugly premonition of evil, vicious and calculating. Everyone seemed to feel it, even the dull captain's nerves were penetrated by the psychic warning which comes that way. Was another storm coming, was it a fire or merely ugly phantoms, discarnate elementals hanging about this dismal ship, or was it a reaction after a sultry day?

Finally we retired and seemed settled for the night. After about four hours of restless sleep I was awakened by a piercing shriek, a woman's cry, then a silence, then another but of quite different quality, in a different direction, again the same cry. I jumped up, threw on a coat and walked out on the deck. Just as I did there was another shriek, but from an-

other part of the ship. Groping my way along in the dark I ran into a number of people also in search. "What is it?" I said. "Someone ill, someone hurt?" But no one seemed to know. We ran along the deck to the captain's room, whom we found dressing hastily.

"It is nothing,—be calm. I will be out in a moment," he said.

We waited breathlessly and the captain, who seemed to take an eternity in which to dress, came down and gave orders and asked questions to ascertain the cause of the trouble. We followed him about for many minutes until assured that there was nothing, and then returned to our rooms. I was too nervous to sleep. I was puzzled and bewildered. Of course it *was* something—what was it? . . .

Finally, after an hour of futile thought, I dropped off to sleep to be awakened by another shriek. I was too exhausted, too frightened this time to move, so I sat up in bed breathlessly, wondering what it could be. I never heard such a strange cry in my life, a cry of abject horror. I was about to lie down. I glanced from my window, and then my blood seemed to congeal in my veins, as there, star-

ing blankly into space were a woman's eyes, wild eyes, grinning hideously, her face pale, her hair white and cut short, thick and very stiff, hanging directly over her ears. Her neck was bare, her face ghastly, her lips blue, her pupils were glassy, the eye-balls red. Finally these horrible eyes ceased staring into space and through the clear moonlight, that particularly bright kind which comes on a summer night, she slowly moved her head in my direction and looked me squarely in the eye, still smiling with a hideous expression, that comes only in the most violent form of insanity. Involuntarily I myself shrieked and she moved slowly away from my window, and in about two minutes I heard someone else cry out, and I knew that this weird demon had slyly walked on to the next open window, had looked in.

After a few minutes, it seemed hours, everyone was up; the captain was searching the ship, asking questions, gathering descriptions, etc., so as to find the woman who had frightened us. Every place was searched, but no one was to be found who answered the description. There was no clue, no sign, but we

all knew we had seen the same individual. After an hour the doctor found her hidden in the second cabin, where he took her in charge. It seemed she had escaped from a sanitarium in New Orleans where she had been sent for this particular mania of frightening people.

It seemed a bad beginning for a long sea voyage and my nerves were badly unstrung. Then the two people next to me on my deck disturbed me. They were so nervous and strange. I heard the woman say, "I did not know you were on board; how did it happen?"

"I followed you," he said. "I wanted to be near you."

"Why are you here; why should you follow me? You never cared," she said as she looked at him. . . .

There were pale shadows flitting across his face, little blue veils darted around; once in a while blue lights, the kind you see around the heads of mystics. There was a soft swish of the water, a forlorn song of a sailor, the fog-horn blew, then an echo, . . . an answer from another ship, . . . a silence . . . a deep breath, and the lover's voice saying, "I want to talk to you!"

"I cannot bear it," said the woman mechanically. "I cannot stand any more shocks. Why did you not tell me,—why did you startle me like this?"

"I came for a rest. I wanted to be near you. I am happy."

"Happy?" she said, "on this dismal steamer, with these awful people and that crazy woman aboard?"

"Yes," he said. "I have nearly finished my work, and soon I shall rest."

"What work?" she said.

"*Your* book," he answered quietly.

"So you wrote my book for me," she said sarcastically, while looking into his eyes which seemed to understand without words.

Words rather annoyed him. He said that lovers should learn to understand through telepathy, that the use of words was primitive; an undeveloped medium of expression; they should be abolished. Certainly there are thoughts too deep for words. Where words cease, music begins, which is another word for harmony, and harmony just another word for telepathy. For when souls are properly

atuned and in proper harmony, words are unnecessary.

"I have written too much for you today," he continued.

"Are you mad?" she said. "I have not seen you for six months."

"You have not seen me objectively," he answered quickly, "but your entire subjective mind has been permeated by my thought. You are *me*, you are no longer yourself. I have absorbed you, not in the spirit of a vampire, but because I must; our souls are too close together."

"Together," she said, skeptically. "You do not love me. I alone have loved you."

"That is true," he replied, "but your love and sensitiveness and my virility made it so. These Laws of the Metaphysical World are as potent, as regular, as balanced as the Laws you know so well in your physical world."

"Perhaps. . . . But is it true, *can* it be true, that I do not do my own work?"

"No one does their own work, except on the material or objective plane. The minute you become subjective something or someone dominates you. . . .

SUBCONSCIOUS ENTANGLEMENT 59

"How dangerous!" she answered excitedly. .

"Not if you keep your heart pure; then only something good can govern you."

"What if I am bad?" she asked.

"Then you deserve to be unhappy," he said. "It is the immutable Law of Attraction, 'As a man thinketh, so is he.' "

Here he broke off suddenly and said, "Stop and think, my dear, have not your tastes changed, . . . are you not different in many ways, . . . just as I am changed?"

A sudden hot flash of realization came upon her, filling her with a feeling of awe, as he began to enumerate certain changes perfectly consistent,—stable changes. As she recalled the first change she shuddered with horror. She had always been a quiet, poised individual. In spite of any inroad upon her heart and mind she had always retained a harmonious disposition, until a year previous, when she had become irritable, vindictive, and at times almost vicious. She liked to hurt people, certain people, many people, because they annoyed her.

Secondly, her taste for literature had

changed. She had been a general reader, but had never cared for French literature or historic fiction, and now loved this type of reading exclusively.

Thirdly, the taste for food and drink had changed. She previously was indifferent to tea and coffee. Now she craved them, and was fastidious to a degree to the selection of these stimulants. Again she realized how she had longed for the woods, for the country, for the fresh air. Previously she had proclaimed the fact that she could live in a locked box and breathe and be happy. Now all of these new tastes had been his tastes, while he now possessed all her tastes, characteristics, her very personality.

“You have my exact individuality; *you are me, I am you!*” she exclaimed.

She grew faint as this knowledge dawned upon her. “What can I do?” she questioned. “I could bear with the change in taste for literature, for the country, etc.; but your disposition—that would kill me! It is a pin-pricking kind of disposition; there are sharp points to it, always. It is the most insidious nature a human being can have, because it

SUBCONSCIOUS ENTANGLEMENT 61

always hurts someone. Always there is in-harmony. It is like a horrible demon that possesses you, and, just at the time that happiness is near, this nature hurts the object it desired or loved, in spite of itself. It is like a coiled cobra, though apparently asleep, could awaken in a moment and sting before reason could withhold it. This a man might stand, but a woman—never. No sensitive person could live under such an influence. It will kill me," she said vehemently. "That is why I am ill; that is the mystery the doctors cannot diagnose. Take it away, take it back," she cried. "I cannot bear it!"

Gently he answered with her voice, in her way, "Don't you understand?"

"No," she said, "I don't understand; it must not be."

"We are married," he said. "That is why."

"Married?" she said. "You *are* mad!"

"No, it is you who do not see clearly; you do not think deeply enough. Look farther into your mind, analyze, be just. I mean that our souls, our subconscious minds, have

blended so thoroughly, so completely, that we can no longer retain our former individualities. You are married to me in the Heaven World that Swedenborg describes."

"Then why not in the Material World?" she asked.

"Because I love you too much," he said.

"Too much?" she asked. "I cannot understand."

He continued: "The physical union would distort the beauty of the spiritual union. It is too perfect, too beautiful as it is. Don't let us tarnish the perfect purity of a beautiful love. Let it remain without even the danger of disillusion. No passion should mingle with a holy love."

"Holy?" she said desperately.

"Yes," he answered, "we live as the angels do, now, here on earth. Few have done this and fewer still have done this and *realized* it. *I realize it.*"

"It is a cold love," answered the woman vehemently. "There is no warmth in it. My heart is breaking for human love. I cannot bear it; it is too good for me to understand and I do not like it."

"Tonight I shall meet you in the little garden that Peter Ibbetson knew, where you will know the exaltation, the revelation in the things you do not now understand. Tonight," he said, "think of me in your *dreams*."

"Parva sed apta," he said tenderly. "Bien ~~tant~~."

"What do *you* know of dreaming true?" she said eagerly, "and parva sed apta. You, with your irritable, skeptical disposition?"

"You forgot I no longer have that disposition; *you* have it. I am *you*, who so loved and understand the Spiritual Laws and Correspondences."

Things do not always end happily in this world, I thought as I jotted down these notes in my diary. The woman next to me interested me greatly. I could not resist watching her and sometimes catching bits of the conversation she had with the dark man at her side.

"I cannot bear myself," she continued vehemently. "How ugly I have become!"

This was what I heard her say to her companion as I entered my cabin. And

again, as I turned off my light, I was disturbed by their muffled voices.

"I tell you I cannot bear it," I heard the woman say. "The years have been too long and the futility so crushing. There is no reason to live. I am not afraid of death. I desire it!"

Then they moved away from my window and I heard no more until the next morning the stewardess told me that a woman had jumped overboard. "The lady with the haunted look," she said. "The man is dead," I said mechanically. "It was a *woman*," repeated the stewardess."

"The woman's soul is alive, it is living in the man. It is only the woman's body that has died." But *this* I said to myself!

Weird things happen sometimes on southern vessels. Perhaps they catch the fever of the tropics, but the atmosphere is that of over-intensity. It is too exciting for the nerves.

I wondered how the man would seem. Later I passed him. He looked quite cheerful, but I said, "I am sorry about your friend."

SUBCONSCIOUS ENTANGLEMENT 65

"I am glad. He is at rest now." For a moment I had forgotten their exchange of personalities.

"*He?*" I said.

"Yes, *he*; *you don't understand.*"

"Perhaps I *do*," I answered, and slowly walked down the deck. . . .

THE LAST SUMMER

THE LAST SUMMER

Two young people, a man and a woman, stood upon the shore; the sun was shining, the waves broke merrily upon the surf, bringing a little song with them; the sea weeds seemed more mystic than usual; the slender fish darted upon the pebbles.

The fishermen dragged in their nets, full and strong. Children played games and sang wedding songs. An east wind brought a swift major tone of strength. The sun sank slowly, enveloped in gold and flame; yet somehow there was a sadness everywhere.

"Listen to the waves," said the woman to her lover. "Do you hear them? Do you hear the merry song come in. Do you hear the sad one going out?"

"No," he said, "I hear only the happy one coming in."

“Look into the sky; see the golden clouds come toward us; see the grey ones going out.”

“But the children sing,” he said. “They sing merry songs and their echoes are also sweet. It is only the winds and the clouds; come near to me and forget these fantastic thoughts. Look deep into your own heart. There is no sadness there.”

“Sadness? Oh, yes, there is! There is a haunting sadness, like that strange note in the children’s song. Listen how merrily it begins and how that minor note creeps in! See how the sail boats dash in toward the shore and how languidly they go out again. See how the dust is about us, creeping and settling upon us. Hear that bird in the distance, how wildly it calls out and how the cry breaks in its throat, breaking into a false note!

“Feel my heart, how it beats so strong and clear and then almost dies in my breast. Look into my eyes and see the brightness, how transient it is, as though the whole world were afraid, afraid of an unknown force, as though there was some subconscious premonition of disaster, decay and death!”

"You are morbid," said the man. "I hear, I see nothing except the joy, the exaltation, the brightness of the evening. Come close, my little one. . . ."

"I cannot," she said. "I must listen to the warning. Something is near, something insidious, real and ugly. Now, you can see, come closer to the shore. Hurry! Look far out and see that strange thing in the distance. What is it? See how it comes up and goes down so suddenly."

"Oh, it is only an ugly boat," said the man. "Let us go away from the shore; let us go to the woods."

"Oh, no," she said. "They are so far away. Let us remain here."

"But there are daisies and violets there. There are green leaves for your tired body. There is a halo of occult love to encircle your brown head. There is a nightingale and the love birds and the strange crickets that chant in a minor key. There are jasmine and tuberoses. There are gulf breezes that will vibrate in the pine tree and the night will envelope you. Come," he said.

"Yes, I will come," she said languidly, "for

it is the last summer . . . the last. . . . I will come."

"But there is that strange thing again in the water!"

"Let us walk swiftly then to the hyacinths and the golden-rolls," said the man.

"See that ugly thing again come out of the water. I do not fear, . . . but what is the humming noise?"

"Oh, it is the mill in the distance. It is the forest men cutting their timber."

"No, no, it is a queer bird; see how it flies so steadily, so high above us."

"Wait, I shall look again. Oh, I see now," said the man. "Do not be afraid, it is just what happens every day now: it is the enemy soaring above us. It is the enemy scouting our beautiful southern shore. They do not want us. They are heading toward the big city. Do not fear, my little one. It will not hurt you."

"I *did* hear a danger signal in the waves," said the woman. "*It is the last summer.* Next year, when the June roses bloom for us, you will be gone; and it is the last summer for them, too, for all the sweet lovers there in

the great city! There will be no more Latin lovers, no more French songs,—no more happy care-free faces! No carnival, no pretty white dresses with red sashes to be seen in the quaint streets of old New Orleans; but black dresses, weary hearts and *war faces*—some strained, some bewildered, some tired, others desperate. Little newsboys calling out the last bleak news of the evening. Don't you see that it is all gone, forever! . . .”

“Yes, it is gone only until we master the enemy,” said the man. “There is only one way. The way is to crush them, and it is with the *sword*.”

“You are mistaken, my lover. There is another way, the way, however, that you do not believe nor understand. There is another way to fight and to-night *I* shall begin to fight.”

“You?” he said.

“Yes! I shall fight, too!”

“Leave me alone! I want to go into the silence. I want to unite myself with those who are using their power through *Thought*! What strange things you say here in the

woods! I do not understand, or is it that Nature makes you see more clearly?" said the man.

"Yes, that is it, my lover. We thought things in the city but here we *know*. But leave me now—I want to be here *alone*." Walking reluctantly away into the dusk, he stopped and looked toward her. . . . As he turned he caught a glimpse of a figure kneeling in the tall grass, straight and strong, with these words echoing clearly in the calm evening:

"Only good can triumph. Send forth the Immortals; the White Masters. those that lived so close to Joan of Arc—to France—to all Mystics—to all nations—to all Creeds! Protect us, guide us in the infinite way, so that no matter how strong the enemy, the triumph will be ours, because *you* are near."

Straining his ear to listen he caught now and then a pathetic childlike petition, little personal reminders to God. . . .

"Certainly you love little children. I know it. And you love us, too, don't you? Please stay right here with us; but, oh, dear God of tenderness, *don't forget France!*" . . .

As he stood there listening to this prayer,

strange weird whistles were to be heard in the distance with that insidious sound one hears from a southern-bound vessel. Black crows flocked about in the great oak trees; squirrels crept about noiselessly without their usual playfulness. Everything in nature seemed in a strange mood. There was a stillness, a warning, a premonition, a presence symbolic of separation, loneliness and death.

But as he looked again he saw her figure, straight and strong, kneeling in the distance. Psychically he saw the young moon calmly come out of the dark clouds and a star gradually flash out bright and clear. A lark began singing in the dusk and the jasmine sent out its fresh virile perfume; a gentle peace had suddenly surrounded him. Was it a coincidence, or was it symbolic of the future, when our allied forces would triumph over the brutal foe? Swift pictures ran through his mind. There was Napoleon's spirit back of Foch. There was Lincoln guiding Wilson. There were Joan of Arc and the strength of Madame Roland and even the audacity and charm of the Three Musketeers. There were strength and wit and solemnity mingled with

cheerful daring! Back of these, there was something quite mystic, something difficult for the mortal eye to see; for they were the *Immortals*, and by them were small children, chanting their praises and over all of these was a great gold Cross, with a crimson rose in its heart: the rose was symbolic of the sacrifice of beauty in our young manhood, and as he walked slowly into the heart of nature—the woods—and the newly cut grass—the realization came to him that Swedenborg was right in the belief that there were Wars in Heaven as well as on earth and the symbolism of the Rosicrucians was made clear: that all beautiful souls are firmly linked with immortality (*the rose to the cross*), that even the angels are attracted and bound to the Cause of Courage—honor and *supreme justice!* . . .

THE HUGUENOT

THE HUGUENOT

"I sent my soul into the invisible; it returned and said to me, I myself am Heaven and Hell." *Rubaiyat* of Omar Khayam.

"I created him!" These are the words that caught my ear, as I strolled by a young woman in the Bois. She was blonde, tall, commanding, a splendid type of Greek beauty, broad-shouldered, magnificently chiselled. I had noticed her often; we had passed each other in our daily walks and when we passed there was always a look of recognition, yet we had not met on the physical plane. I determined to meet her. One day I deliberately stopped in front of her and said abruptly, "Let's be friends."

She started a bit at such an informal and unexpected greeting, but was quick to see the

spirit in which I spoke to her, that I had a well-defined interest in her.

“Let us walk,” she said, “and who *are* you?”

“Zarah Kreeshna,” I said modestly.

“I never heard of you. I never heard that name before,” she added thoughtfully.

“No,” I answered, “I am a very simple person; you wouldn’t know me. But tell me, I must know, what did you mean the other day when you said to your companion, ‘*I created him.*’ Such a strange remark! I fancy it had some occult significance.”

“It had,” she said.

“But first tell me, what is the book you have in your hand?”

“It is one of Algernon Blackwood’s,” I said. “‘The Human Chord.’ Do you like him? Do you understand his work? *If* you do, you would understand some things that I might say to you. For instance, I knew at a glance, the first day I saw you here, that you were psychic and that we would be sympathetic. I will tell you what I meant in those words which so impressed you, but do not ask who I am. Don’t think me impolite, but I

would rather not tell you my name. There is a reason, a good one; some time you will know."

"Go on," I said. "It is the soul of you that interests me. I don't care anything about your name. You are one of my new, yet old, friends. We have met before, either in our subconscious life or in some former existence."

"Of course," she said eagerly, quite as naturally as an oriental would, while I listened attentively, watching the pensive eyes that looked deep into mine, as if putting the objective world behind her.

"Yes, I created him," she said tenderly, "in the occult sense, through *desire*, through longing, through will, in other words, I created a mental picture a matrix of what I wanted, and afterwards I found the material manifestation of that desire, the Immutable Laws of Attraction and Correspondence worked for me. I found the individual that I had fancied. I wanted someone unique like D'Artagnan in 'The Three Musketeers' of Dumas. Of course, you remember him, the fearless, handsome D'Artagnan? And it all

came about in such an unexpected way; they always do, you know, these *subjective* creations. I was completely off guard, so to speak. An acquaintance asked to bring a friend to tea. I reluctantly consented, as I feared the friend might be as uninteresting as the acquaintance, for he was a commonplace individual. However, they came. I had not changed my gown that afternoon. It was a very unbecoming one, yet I did not care and I scarcely glanced at myself in the long mirror as I leisurely walked forward to greet my guests. I fairly gasped and stood bewildered, for there he was—the face, the personality—the man I had pictured! Catching my breath and looking a bit bewildered, I finally succeeded in assuming a casual expression, while the newcomer I could see was going through the same experience, for he too recognized me as a familiar soul. Pouring tea clumsily, I finally managed to conduct myself in a conventional way, when all the time my heart was saying, ‘It’s you, it’s you, at last you’ve come! You *had* to come, isn’t it wonderful? There *is* a God who answers prayers. I am so happy—I . . .’ And I could feel that he

was thinking the same thoughts in the very same words!

“The afternoon passed on somehow and as he left I unconsciously followed him to the door, realizing I was doing an informal thing, but I walked on out to the door and to the elevator!”

“‘Good-bye,’” he said, then suddenly changing it to ‘*au revoir*’ significantly as if to say, ‘We shall meet again soon, you understand, I know. . . .’”

Here my new friend suddenly stood up, opening her parasol impulsively with a shadow of pain about her face. “Enough for to-day. I must run away now. If I stay I shall talk too much. Perhaps I shall see you to-morrow here. Do you come every day? Bring your book and we shall read together, you and I. It seems that I have known you a thousand years,” she added graciously.

“Perhaps you have,” I replied, and reluctantly bade her good-afternoon.

The next day I took the same walk, the same path, and waited. She did not come for a few minutes and I fancied that she had decided that our friendship was quite too informal,

but, after a short wait, I got a glimpse of the tall, impressive figure, strolling down the path, poised, thoughtful, serene.

She was dressed in a peculiar shade of blue, with a tint of lavender in it, heliotrope I should call it, with some fresh heliotrope at her waist, a parasol of flame and a hat of this same penetrating shade. Her face was pale, her lips crimson, the eyes deeply blue, as though intensified by thought. Gracefully waving her hand she came up to me and said:

"I am here, you see. Didn't you know I would come?"

"I hoped so," I said.

"Come, let us walk and talk about *him*. You don't know what it means to be able to speak to someone who will not criticise, someone who understands, someone who has no curiosity and is just interested in me because it is me. Let's not mention the weather," she added prettily, "or any other conventional thing as a prelude. Let's be natural and think aloud."

"You left off at the first meeting," I said.
"What happened then?"

"Happened?" she exclaimed. "I could

never tell you; it's too long, too personal and too sweet. You will have to imagine much of it!

"It just happened, we knew each other! There were no conventional delays, we loved each other at once, just as Dante and Beatrice did, you know, like all real lovers, and oh, how happy we were! . . .

"It was June. You know what June means? The first warm month of the summer. It has always meant to me a sort of beginning, an occult introduction to the sensuous, warm, beautiful things of life. It is a sort of love symbol to me. I cannot imagine June without love," she added hastily. "Can you?"

"Go on with your story. I just want to know about you. You interest me!"

"I know it," she said quite naturally. "You like me because I am psychic, don't you?"

"Yes," I said, "but be careful how you use that word. It is so misunderstood."

"Yes," she said, "all subtle things are, but people who are not psychic are strangers to me and they bore me unmercifully. They

have no souls; they are just people, mere minds, that's all."

"But, tell me," I said. "Was your June *all* beautiful?"

"Yes," she said, "but before I tell you about it I must describe him to you.

"It is a difficult thing to describe him. Many felt his power but few appreciated what it was. It was too fine to be understood by the many. The word subtle would come nearest, I think, in expressing the keynote to his character. He was sensuous, but not sensual; romantic, but not sentimental; fastidious, but not exacting; sweet, but not inane; yielding, but not weak; sensitive, but not feminine; clever, but not profound. He seemed to embody all the fine things in a perfectly balanced way. There was this same quality of fineness in his physical self; he was highly strung in the thoroughbred sense of the word, every muscle and nerve quivering with energy and subtle strength. His skin was fair, his face flexible. I never saw such an expressive face, every line and nerve seemed to come into play whenever he wished to express himself. There was a rare something one seldom finds

in a man; a potent indefinable sweetness; a freshness about him. His body seemed to be permeated with a suggestion of perfume which enchanted and compelled. There was much of the boy in him. He made you think of him in 'pastel' shades. There was an aura of color characteristic of his individuality. He was a man, but in his own particular way. His voice was beautiful; it possessed all of the deep, yet tender, tones of an organ that seemed to vibrate in an echo as though each word was a caress and reluctantly left an instrument so perfectly attuned.

"How well I remember his running up the stairway. It seemed that he only took one or two steps, throwing himself upon the divan in a boyish way, chatting gaily, or suddenly going to sleep like a tired child and always, when he had gone away and I put my head upon the same pillow, I found that indefinable something, that suggestion of the forest, the odor of pine trees and young leaves in the air. There were so many possibilities in him. He responded so quickly through his sensitiveness. One could suggest things to him, telepathically and he would absorb the idea like a

mental sponge. His moods were often not his own. I created them through my own subconsciousness just as I called him out from the four corners of the earth by my will and desire. How often I had laughed, rather jeered, at the power of *Thought*, the power to attract or bring forth the type of individual you desired. It seemed a visionary dream that one could wish a thing into existence, but now I realize it to be a Metaphysical Law. Think concretely and persistently and the things you desire gravitate to you."

Here she left me abruptly, saying, "Tomorrow I shall bring you some letters that I wrote him. Read them and you will know my story. When you finish reading them just hand the letters to me and don't say anything, because if you do I shall cry and I hate tears."

The next day she came, handed me the letters, kissed me, and walked away. . . .

"DEAREST—You must not ask me not to write you. I must—it helps a little. All day I have had a physical ache in my heart in exact correspondence with the mental one. It

is that horrible weird suffering one feels when death is near. I am like a chained animal—I do not cry out—I cannot get away—I cannot change my environment. The desire to see you is so keen that each moment seems a thousand years,—in my physical self so tired—so exhausted—suffering of the dumb, deep kind it is.

“Everything I see reminds me of you and the happiness of other people taunts me. So many times I have a bleak agonizing sorrow—but somehow I do not seem to be able to bear this one. You can hardly guess how I have changed in a few days: not pale or thin as in the story books—but dazed and bewildered, and my smile is gone—for the sunshine and all of the sweet bright normal things have gone as well as the big and beautiful ones.

“Oh! my dear—to-night I shall lie close in your arms—those etheric arms of yours—for we know that we are sure to meet on that Spiritual plane where there is neither time nor space—in that great Subconscious life where we go in dreams. They are not the warm, living, flesh-and-blood arms of my strong lover. They are so cold, . . . so dis-

tant, . . . when I want the warmth and strength of you! Is there no Lethe, no annihilation? Must I suffer this with a crushed heart and broken spirit? Must I endure this something which is taking my youth away? Tears, tears, always tears; they never cease—they seem to be endless. . . . It is because it is that particular grief that comes with the death of a little child. There is a peculiarly tender element in it. It hurts so, it is too keen, too completely sweet, . . . like the soft brow of a little child wrapped in death.

“If I could be diverted by worldly things, it would help me—but I seem to see too clearly their superficial quality and like a wise Priestess I recoil from them and throw myself at the feet of the great Lover of the Universe with a prayer for comfort, only to find Silence, Ether, Nothingness. . . .

“This is a simple letter, my dear—a big grief briefly put—yet, I know that you will feel the directness, the intensity in which I write you. The thoughts that come out from that little Shrine of mine where you alone dwell—where thoughts too lovely for mere words vibrate in one great unison for you.

“Do you remember the silly, funny little things we did? Such innocent, childish little things they were! How we cooked dinner together, for instance, when neither one of us knew how to cook—and the absurd little stories I told you about the ‘sheeps,’ as I called them, that I used to play with in the country? Do you remember the trips, the laughter, the quarrels, the making up, the short days and long glorious nights . . . the stealing away from the World the counting of pennies to make ends meet? . . . Do you remember our mutual hopes and childish fears—the playing time—the sunshine—the long walks—and always so near together? How we held each other, if only by our little fingers, much to the amusement of the people in Versailles, Fontainebleu and Neuilly? Do you remember that little room in Neuilly,—the quaint old church in front of it—the solemn chimes—the fresh plants outside the window where the moon shown through that strange willow tree—and the love bird peeping in? Do you remember the little one that died that night because she had lost her mate? . . . The quaint odor of roses—the wild flowers

that grew by the tree—the crickets and strange humming things that seemed to come out to greet us—the sound of children's voices in the distance singing quaint old songs—and the man in the arbor who played the guitar and sang the 'Ave Maria' while we stood lost in the sweetness of the summer night, in the dignity, the fineness of mutual understanding, realizing the divinity in love?

“That night *was* a dream, not in the idle sense of the word, but in a sublime contemplation where we paused to meditate in mystic beauty, in that serene atmosphere where swift messengers lead us to the dawn of a new day—a day where two souls look deep into the heart of love, which we believe to be God! . . .

“To-day I have forced myself out for a walk, with the hope of being helped, but nothing helps. *Physical things* are of no permanent comfort, only God can comfort and He seems so far away just now; yet I believe that the Great Lover of the Universe must know and understand and be near all lovers, for there is a kinship of the infinite kind, and after much patience and courage, I am sure

that I shall feel the Unseen Forces again that I have known and loved so well in the old lonely days before we met.

“I am wondering how you have lived these two days. Have you adjusted yourself to old conditions and already learned how to be diverted by other things and people, or is there a little ache in your heart, and a warning, that, after all, no one could be so near, so close or so a part of you as I?

“Write me how you feel—if you are indifferent, it will help me to forget—if you are not indifferent, it will help me to live in a beautiful memory of a lover who was worth while—one who was stable and fine and strong. I know now that the old expression that one can live a lifetime in a few hours is true. I have lived an eternity in this short time since we said good-bye.

“Are you reading the books I sent you? I hope so! And do you do the physical things so far as your health is concerned? Take care of your body—it is beautiful—you owe that to Art, to the great something that gave it life, a strange thing life is after all! There is a tie and a sameness throughout all nature. Do

you know how little lambs call and cry out for their mothers, . . . how little birds pine and die for their mates, . . . how nothing in the world is single? The desire to find always the other half of one's self, the 'Seraphita' of life? . . ."

"All to-day I have felt as if some great soul hovered near, some majestic yet tender spirit, trying to express itself through me, battling as it were with two forces, the earthly and the super-earthly, yet determined to convey its message. Indeed there *is* a 'presence,' something near, something very fine and beautiful. Too, I seem to see a little white soul all enveloped in blue—the palest blue, two little hands that move incessantly. It floats about continually, trying to rest upon my heart, yet somehow it cannot, for it is neither quite spirit nor flesh. It is a little soul flung into space—into the dense clouds of Ether, catching only a glimpse of its mother as a lost child sees a light in the darkness or a soul at sea gets a far-off glimpse of the warm red flash of a distant lighthouse; yet eternally

losing its way, never quite reaching the shore. . . .

“That is the agony which the Egyptians and Indians pictured in their early teachings, the result of the sin of refuting Nature’s laws, the deadly sin of not becoming the mother instrument, the medium through which these little souls can reincarnate. It is upon this that the Catholics base a part of their hard but true religion. . . .

“Picture, for instance, the Ether densely populated with these little ones pressing close to our earthly bodies, waiting for love to give them life. They enter our souls, our hearts, our bodies, and then we cast them away, not to become annihilated, as we imagine, but left to roam, to wander, to grope in the darkness, with little angel cries,—cries too faint to be heard by our gross and selfish ears. Little cries so tender, so pitiful—only to find expression at last through the wrong medium, being caught by desire to an alien mother or left to drift in a sea of delicate color, wild flowers and soft music, with the essence of flowers as the only warmth and

the sound of music the only balm. Few of us realize this fact—because so few of us live in the beautiful. The beautiful reveals everything in time, the metaphysical laws, all of which are well proportioned and normal.

“A little more impersonal meditation, a little less personal introspection would reveal much. This is the wisdom of the East, that glorious East which has put wisdom and recognition above worldly success. They see with larger eyes and greater soul the infinite range of life; the importance of divine revelation, for sorrowing hearts and undeveloped minds. . . .

“It is a very strange day to me. It is both happy and sad. I am thinking such beautiful things about you and life and love—and yet my heart aches so. The tiny picture you see is a symbol. It expresses two things—the type of the little one and the sorrow of me. The tear you see in the Madonna’s eye is mine. Sometimes it materializes and blinds my eye but always it is in my heart. Not only now—but in the years to come—there will be that silent grief of ours. I say—ours—be-

cause I could not love you if I did not believe that you loved and felt the *beautiful* things of life. Could anything be more complete—more beautiful than the living expression of a mutual love? For nothing dies.—dearest,—the flesh may be crushed and torn—but the spirit—the counterpart—never. It lives in the Etheric world and is very near, certainly very near, to those who believe and love spiritual things. They attract souls from the so-called ‘other world’ simply because they *love*. Love is a Force—an agency, just as electricity is—it is positive and negative. It heals, it kills, according to its intensity and proportion and to its direction. I direct this force with dogmatic and virile strength, so that it reaches far out into the great beyond and back again, *but always to you*.

“I believe that your mother sometimes expresses herself through me, not only because I love you so tenderly, but because I am in sympathy—I am *en rapport*, as it were—with the forces she uses in reaching you. I think she has used me impersonally as a mere means, but I hope that she may learn to care for her medium, because she is your mother. I do not

use this word Medium in the common sense, but in the larger sense, the scientific sense—the sense that all life is Law and the Law of Attraction is a compelling thing. I am on a plane she can reach. I am vibrating, so to speak, at a rate that attracts her, because I love everything beautiful and nothing unbeautiful. Is it not very simple?—and is it not precious sweet? . . .

“So much I might say to you—my heart is fresh—my mind active—but my poor body is so tired, so weary, so lonely because you are gone and the virility of life is lost to me. . . .

“I have seen many paintings; I have seen many plays; I have seen death and unhappiness; but I have never seen anything as tragic and utterly weary as your face when you stood at my door. Do you remember it? . . . You looked so tired! I am afraid that you do not.

“The solid beauty of our love impresses me. When I think of others and then of you—it is like the white morning after a black night; everything becomes clear and crystalline with the rising curtain of natural response and

correspondence. The little things that chant with the rising sun are a part of it. The chant is the joy; the sun is the symbol. In this great exaltation my soul is a Force—a mental illumination. In other words, I come into my own. I am the ego that Karma has developed through suffering, or the individual that a clean life has made strong.

“I have always had a love for elegance; I hate the melodramatic and the sentimental; and yet there is only one word to express my love for you—a much used and abused word; the word—slave. But is there not a royal beauty in a woman’s recognition of her master?

“I am not ashamed to write you thus. I am glad—I am glad of the strength and stability of my love and glad that you are big enough to understand it. The superficial or common man could not grasp it, but I know that my ideal and idol can, with his broad vision and sensitive soul, comprehend the dignity of immortal things.

“There is a belief that most of the poets were always in love. At first thought this might seem a weakness, a scattering of force

and a lack of consistency, but upon deeper analysis, it is a perfectly rational thing; for the poet realizes that without love in his heart, there is no poetry of the lyric kind, and he knows that to eliminate love is to cut off a current, a force. When there is no love in the heart, there may be intellect—there may be brilliancy—but there can never be *wisdom*, for *wisdom is of the soul*. Therefore, without the spiritual nature in expression, there can be no perfect and symmetrical development. When love is gone—it is like the lark with the song crushed in its throat, or a Stradivarius when the strings have snapped, or a butterfly with its wings clipped. There can be no song; no melody; no soaring into the realm of the transcendental! Life is only a sordid reality, a greed and grind, a mechanical process. . . . *The soul is the secret of charm*. Many people who are physically beautiful and mentally alert possess no definite fascination for highly evolved egos, because *only a soul can hold a soul*. . . .

“The real life is the soul life. Our material life is a mere existence—a phase through which we make our spiritual life either an

epic or an inferno—a blessing or a curse—a revelation or a benediction.

“I shall say good-night now, or rather good morning, for it is the beginning of a new day; we have left behind the greed and grind of the world. It seems far away, asleep in the valley, while we are journeying toward the mountain peak, quite forgetting the hurts of life. Often I have had visions of the future—they may be dim to you but not to me—for I see them plainly, naturally, tenderly, and with sacred comprehension!

“I love your love for your mother—your splendid endurance—your rugged mind and royal manhood. Must the days be long before we meet again? If you ever saw a blind child walk you will understand how remote and strange life is to me without you. I stagger and sometimes fall in the crowd, but I always get up with a smile and a blessing for *you*. . . .”

In an hour or so she came back to me. I handed her the letters silently and we walked together in the warm evening towards the sun-

set. I never saw it so bright, so radiantly beautiful.

"Everything goes away," she said pensively, as she looked at the sun.

"It only *seems* to," I said. "Nothing is really lost!"

I bade her adieu and went back to my *pension*. Each day I went to the Bois, taking this same walk with the hope that I might find her. I knew that our strange meeting had been for some reason—perhaps I could comfort her, but she never came—I never saw her again.

"How strangely people meet and how strangely they lose each other!" I thought, as I slowly retraced my steps in the Bois. . . .

THE NOVENA

THE NOVENA

When people of inferior intelligence hear of the Tao they laugh immensely. It would not be the Tao if they did not laugh.

LAOTSE.

As I entered the gate I caught a glimpse of what seemed to be an old-fashioned summer house, entirely covered with ivy. The bees, and the butterflies flew about the scented garden. I heard two voices and I paused to listen a minute before entering. It was Juliet, my friend, who said: "Please don't come in, David. I don't want to be rude you know, but I really cannot let you come in here. It's my temple, my soul's resting place. You would change the vibrations and I want the magnetism to remain the same."

A peal of crude laughter rang out strong in the air, and as I walked on I heard the man say, "*You child*," as if to say, you vis-

ionary deluded creature! It was typical. He laughed at what he could not understand.

I walked toward Juliet. She sighed. It was a way with her, for she had learned to sigh instead of uttering words of criticism. Her blue eyes looked troubled but she smiled as she always did, not inanelly, but with sweetness and wisdom.

"You never lose your poise," I said, going toward her.

"No," she answered. "I live under the Law; the *Law of Harmony*. It took me a long time to learn this," she added, as she gently leaned on the post of her shaded door. "Come in and see my little place," she said quickly; "it is quite Oriental."

"Why Oriental?" I asked carelessly.

"Come in and I will show you. First look at that strange light shining through my window and see the huge statue of Laotse."

Opening the door softly, we entered. I felt as though blue veils had suddenly rushed forth to envelope me. There was a keen, swift vibration, an atmosphere of dominant color and spirit. There were many kinds of Oriental plants, chiefly of yellow and crimson.

There was an incense burner of Satsuma, some shaded candles, rosy cups and many strange pieces of bronze and brass figures. There were vivid yellow curtains on the windows, beneath which were black cushions embroidered in blue birds.

"Let us meditate," she said thoughtfully, "and later I will serve your tea. Some people would call it introspection," she added, as I sat down noiselessly. "I paint here. It is an inspiration to me. That is why I get a certain mystic expression in the eyes of my portraits, something helps me here. I cannot work there in the house, it is too modern and cold. It is purely objective. I must have color and atmosphere about me or I starve, I become helpless."

"What do you see when you paint, Juliet?" I asked, as she handed me my tea.

"Nothing as a rule; I paint as though possessed by a greater and stronger personality than myself. Sometimes I see something about my models, a halo—I think——"

"A halo?" I asked eagerly.

"Yes, I once saw it around a Persian priest. I really saw a light about his head.

Now I know that all the saints had halos.

"The Etheric body is largely composed of color, the quality is determined by the thought. How beautiful souls must be and how free," she added quaintly. "Think of traveling from star to star in a garland of flowers with never a thorn, with never a faded leaf or a bruised rose—only freshness, lovely and infinite, coloring the path to the gods!

"Of course we can go there in our dreams, if we *wish* enough and hurt no living thing, but few of us remember this in our waking hours, because we are not harmonious enough. Every ugly speech keeps us away from the enchanted land, the playground of the immortals. And there is mirth and wholesome fun—it is not all solemnity and meditation—There is work and play, but there is never anything superficial or shallow. . . . The happiness is that of little children playing, because of the radiance—the joy—in their hearts! . . ."

"You say this with such confidence, Juliet."

"Because I *know*," she answered, without the slightest trace of egotism, but with the wisdom of a priestess.

“This place is a shrine to me, my friend. When I am unhappy, I withdraw from the world of action into this secret place and find peace. Somehow I love to picture it as a canopy, quite a beautiful one, large and highly colored, placed beneath a tall tree. The canopy is supported by slender rods of gold and I stand immediately under it. Of course this is merely a symbol . . . as is the tree and the shadowy man in the distance. The shadowy man is in astral form a personality that follows me everywhere. It is indistinct, except the right hand which I see quite clearly. If I think unbeautiful things, he places his hand over his eyes as though more than hurt, as if humiliated and discouraged, and when I think in the beautiful, the hand falls to his side, his eyes become happy, and the smile though indistinct is suggestive of approval. He is my self-appointed guardian, a soul who has gone through the horror of being earth-bound, living on the threshold of life to help me. This touches me deeply, for it is neither parent nor lover, but a friend! The tie is so impersonal in creation yet so personal in expression. It is as though a stately soul walking on the

golden path to Paradise had looked back and seen my distress, had stopped to guide me out of the wilderness into intelligence and understanding.

“Once in a while, a great white search-light flashes out from the Heavens as though looking for him, scanning the land about, but he never looks forward. He just stands silently watching me with steadfast love, a love that an artist has for a fresh pupil, the love that the scientist has for new material; the love that the adept has for the young initiate! . . .

“The blue of my canopy means inspiration . . . the yellow the strength to sustain that inspiration. . . . The tree is the corresponding link in all nature. . . . The shadowy man is the occult master who always appears when the pupil is ready. The symbol of the three is the trinity of life, over which the light of truth is always shining.

“When I make the Master unhappy, it is the great suffering known only to the discarnate soul, who acts as a priest on the threshold; the border land between the infinite and the finite, resisting the celestial music of the

spheres to stand in the black night, bound to earth's dismal tone, which to the evolved soul is torture, for he who knows the serene beauty of the higher planes and still remains with an earthly soul is like the finished musician who must listen with one ear to exquisite harmony and with the other to gruesome discords, to an orchestra divided against itself and yet remaining silent, so as to bring the players together.

The great tree which has sheltered the forest may fall when the axe has penetrated its heart, the bird-mother knows rest through annihilation—the hunter brings her that—the sun sinks into the arms of the infinite, but the white master on the threshold of supersensual life knows no rest, no peace, and sometimes no appreciation, for even the pupil goes on to higher planes, while the Master stands awaiting other souls, like a great mother whose arms are never tired, whose soul is like a white gem shining in the twilight of God's world. . . .

“Let us go now and make a Novena,” she broke off suddenly, rising from her chair. “But Juliet, dear, aren't you tired, and why

do you make Novenas? You are not a Catholic?"

"No," she answered, "but come and I will show you, then I need not tell you anything." She said this serenely, while looking at me with her deep blue eyes.

"Now," I said, "can we not go to-morrow, or some other day?"

"It is to-day that counts, my dear," laying great stress upon the dear. She always said it as though blessing one, it carried the spirit of "Allah be with you," as well as an expression of affection. . . .

"You are so lovely, Juliet," I said, as though thinking aloud. "You are so lovely, and I believe in you, but the road is hard, and it is cold, too. It is not an easy thing to grasp infinite things, they are so subtle."

"They are as simple as a song," she answered with assurance, "just like the motif of a folk song, or a sweet old ballad, like Annie Laurie, for instance, or any simple, dear thing! We make it difficult because we wade through metaphysics and science,—studying higher mathematics as it were, to find the answer to a problem which could have

been solved by our first lessons in arithmetic! The great secret of revelation is to become as simple as a little child, not to doubt, just to trust and love, oh, so deeply!

“You see the love is the motive power which is like a machine. The faith starts the machine and the love is the determining force as to how far and how deeply you will soar! First, you must love a human being. It is natural. Later the love for the spiritual bridegroom will come to you. The seeking, the longing, the reverence one finds in the *Gitanjali* of Tagore, as though mere human power had been overpowered by the spiritual desire that comes to the soul beautiful. It is like the sunrise which gradually brightens the early morning. . . . It comes so naturally, one hardly knows it is there. . . . Yet what would the morning be without it? The rosy colors of the dawn have gone, and then the day is a little gray, until the sun comes up!”

“Yes,” I said, “but it goes down, Juliet. Even the love of God must sleep, too!”

“Yes,” she answered, “but it only *seems* to, —it leaves the moon and the stars to you and to all lovers, for after you once see the sun it

never quite goes down in your soul, it remains as a background to make the human love more beautiful.

“It is like the light shining on a white stone, making the stone give out its full radiance. . . .”

“There is something wonderful in you, Juliet,” I said lovingly. “There is a Presence about you, it is something one only feels about people who love.”

“I am *always* in love, my dear. . . .

“Always,” I said again, thoughtfully. “It never leaves my heart since I have learned to love universally. If one thing goes another comes, and always the presence of the love forces are near me because I think concretely, I think always of them. . . . But sometimes I am ashamed of my thoughts. They are not good enough. I cover my face with my hands, I am ashamed, my heart is singing, but my expression is so poor, I would love to think in colors, in flowers—in beautiful poems—even so beautifully that my thoughts would evolve into a fitting reverence, a tribute of thankfulness and understanding, so that even in the crowd of great musicians who are sending out

their choicest melodies, somewhere, if only in the corner of things, a small shrine would be created, where I could kneel in beauty so that in some hour, even if it be the last one, the dear Christ would stand near me, I could kiss the flowers that His step had brought forth and hear Him say, 'My child!' "

"How simple you are, Juliet, and how personal! You speak of Him as you would a friend."

"No, no, my dear, as I would of a mother. For after all, no one has been so tender, so infinitely sweet. I could never think of Him without tears, not tears for His suffering, but for His understanding. I love Him most because He loved the Magdalene, that was the biggest and most telling thing in His life, for it showed not only mercy, but complete understanding. It appeals to me artistically, intellectually. I never could have cared in the orthodox way, I had to study and think and wonder, and then come back to the essence of things, to simplicity and humility. *Humility is a great thing, it breaks up egotism—small thinking and petty appreciation, and lets a majestic wave of reverence break over the*

mind, taking away blemishes and defective thinking, leaving the soul of things mighty and secure—just as a child laid asleep in flowers. . . .

“Oh! my dear, come with me!” she said. “Let us go where Novenas become occult, since we cannot be in Egypt, India, Persia or wise Chaldea. Let us go where there are candles, incense, rosaries and a Presence. Let us forget the Cult and remember the Symbolism. Let us go together! . . .”

Quite simply we walked out into the dusk, she walked a bit ahead of me, as though leading me. It was warm and the lights had not been lit. We went to St. Anne's. Juliet was dressed in black, her long black beads pressing heavily upon her throat, which was long, yet kind, every line in her was tender, her whole beauty vibrated with a current which penetrated each line, each curve, shrouding her in gentleness.

We walked into the church silently, there was no service, only a few red lights flickered on the altar, a French priest knelt as though lost in prayer, an old woman came in on a crutch, a small child sat in a corner. . . .

There was a silence, a tear, then revelation.

"Ask for something, my dear," she said; "don't specialize, because what you want now might prove to be a mistake later. Louis might belong to someone else and your prayer would not be answered."

"I only want him," I said; "it is no use trying to help me, Juliet, I cannot live without my lover, life would be meaningless."

"Just pray for something beautiful, my dear," she said pleadingly, "and see what will come! So many things, so many surprises. Just like a little child at Christmas. Your tree may have gifts at the end of its branches and the roots may have color, and at the top of the tree you will find peace."

"That is pretty and it may be enough for Juliet but not for me, and aren't you merely deluded?"

"It seems so bleak and cold to me. I don't feel anything except loneliness and fatigue! The road is hard—hard. . . ." I became silent.

"Then the mystics, the philosophers and all the creeds are wrong," she said, "for they all

teach faith and love. Didn't I tell you it was as simple as a song?"

I watched her, I listened. She whispered little messages to me, but I said:

"Juliet, I am tired of lessons now, I want my reward. I want compensation, rest and joy. I want the warmth of a tangible love. I am tired of dream lovers, of etheric ties, of twilight walks, I also hate the dawn! . . . I am weary of half things, of tantalizing preludes in nature and song. I want the heart, the essence of things. I want comprehension, I want realization. I am tired of seeing the lighthouse, but never the shore, the promise, but never the gift. . . ."

She looked at me pensively, thoughtfully, and said:

"And I am weary of men, their love, their hate, of the sensual and sordid, the greed and grind. I am weary of earth's gifts, for they are transient, unreal, they are selfish and often impure! The promise is better than the gift, the expectation keener than the realization,—the lighthouse safer than the shore!"

"You are strange, Juliet," I said, "or perhaps merely wise!"

"*I am supremely happy,*" she answered. "I have found myself. Do not think that I am inhuman. I, too, wanted love, and I found it in my dreams. Each night now I put my head lovingly, reverently on my pillow, knowing that I am able to wander into Paradise with my lover at my side."

"Oh, Juliet," I interrupted; "even if it is true, what is a lover in the Etheric sense? What is a lover without a kiss, without the touch of love? It is meaningless."

"But there is touch," she answered; "the touch is keener than what you have felt, because the etheric body is more highly sensitized. There is a physical life in Paradise, but there is nothing sensual; there is response and realization, but the physical is *only* used as a medium for the soul!"

"Juliet," I said wistfully, "I believe you, but I cannot experience such things myself. I am not good enough."

"You are not patient enough, my dear," she answered tenderly; "that is all. You cannot gain knowledge without study, without concentration, yet you expect to become an adept in spiritual law by a few short prayers

and lessons. I tell you the road is *hard—hard*, if we struggle and doubt," she answered quickly.

"You see, my dear, I must repeat myself again, for these few words give you the key. *Have faith, be as simple as a little child. . . .*"

THE DAWN

THE DAWN

THE MOTHER.

THE CHILD.

THE MOTHER: "What do you see, my child?"

THE CHILD: "Just what you see, mother."

THE MOTHER: "Are you sure?"

THE CHILD: "Why not?"

THE MOTHER: "Because you are clairvoyant, my little one."

THE CHILD: "What is that, mother, is it something queer?"

THE MOTHER: "No, no, it is something beautiful. You see things that others cannot see."

THE CHILD: "Why do you tell me such things, mother; is it because I am dying?"

THE MOTHER: "Hush, my little one, no one ever dies."

THE CHILD: "But they go away, and I don't want to leave you, mother."

THE MOTHER: "Wouldn't you love to run away, just for a little while with the music and pink roses that you know in your dreams? It would not be for long and then there would be no more suffering; you have suffered so long, my little one!"

THE CHILD: "Yes, it is hard to lie down all the time while the other children play. I hear them now beneath my window, and I love to play, too, and the pain in my heart is so bad; but yet I don't want to go with the music and the pink roses just now. I like your arms better."

THE MOTHER: "Yes, they are strong and warm, but if you could see more clearly into Paradise, you wouldn't mind leaving them so much. Try to see farther, try for yourself; try for me!"

THE CHILD: "I was afraid when I heard the doctor tell you last night that I would die, mother!"

THE MOTHER: "He was a stupid doctor, he blundered——"

THE CHILD: "I knew it before—mother."

THE MOTHER: "How did you know?"

THE CHILD: "I know everything!"

THE MOTHER: "Everything?"

THE CHILD: "Yes. I know everything before it happens. I always see pictures in my sleep and sometimes when I am awake at this hour, just as the sun comes up, and whenever people are still, the noise takes my pictures away. Why did the children get up so early this morning?"

THE MOTHER: "Tell me about the pictures."

THE CHILD: "Yes; wait a moment, and I will try to show them to you. Go to the window, ask the children to be still. When I am quiet they will come back to me. They are coming now, the pretty pictures——"

THE MOTHER: "What do you see, my little one?"

THE CHILD: "So many things—— I see the Bright Lady, she is coming again."

THE MOTHER: "The Bright Lady?"

THE CHILD: "Yes, she has a gold dress, a gold fan, and there are yellow roses all about her and the clouds back of her are yellow, too."

THE MOTHER: "Can you see her face?"

THE CHILD: "Yes, she is pretty, and she is looking at you, she has a yellow doll in her arms."

THE MOTHER: "The doll is a symbol, it is my own mother that you see—— Go on, tell me more."

THE CHILD: "She says you know her by the yellow roses, she loved them so. She is going now, but I hear things, such pretty things. It is not music, but the roses have voices. They say something, and the clouds seem to smile. There are children, too, but they talk so wisely that I do not understand anything that they say. I don't see God or the angels with wings, as they say in my story books, but I see such beautiful colors, colors I never saw in our house, and my heart doesn't ache so much now, the pain seems to go away when I look at them."

THE MOTHER (eagerly): "What else do you see?"

THE CHILD: "I see men working; each is standing back of some other man. Like the man with the child on the stage."

THE MOTHER: "You mean the ventrilo-

quist; the man who makes the doll talk?"

THE CHILD: "Yes, like them."

THE MOTHER: "You are seeing the souls in Paradise who talk through men on earth, trying to help them, inspiring them with spiritual ideas."

THE CHILD: "No, this man has a machine, he is trying to show the little men on earth how to use it."

THE MOTHER: "Yes, they help us in everything——"

THE CHILD: "I am so tired now, mother."

THE MOTHER: "I will not ask for anything more, I have questioned you too much. Lie quietly. Let us talk about your playthings, your books or——"

THE CHILD: "Not just yet, mother, I am tired, but I see another picture coming and I am not afraid because the Bright Lady is there again. Can't you see her when she smiles? When she smiles I see the smiles turn into gold waves like her dress. The people back of her reach out for the waves, they rush through their fingers and sink into their hearts and then the people smile. The yellow roses open their petals and the song grows

clearer; the song that the smile started."

THE MOTHER: "I wouldn't talk any more now about the pictures, try to sleep a little."

THE CHILD: "I see a strange old man going up the hill, he is looking for the sun and he cannot find it. The Bright Lady says he is old and tired, because he doesn't know how to think properly; he sees the rainbows and the flowers, but he cannot touch them yet. When he does he will turn into a handsome young prince like the one in my fairy story. There are lots of babies, too, and they are so pretty, and they stand on the branches of the big tree, the tree with the long leaves that swings to and fro. It swings the little pink babies to sleep. Whenever I look at the tree I see a rosy face in the heart of each leaf. How do they keep from falling, mother? They swing so constantly."

THE MOTHER: "They are not afraid; that is why they do not fall."

THE CHILD: "If they fall there is a velvet carpet beneath the tall tree, and it is covered with white hyacinths and rosebuds, and there is an orchestra composed of little children; the children who play the violins are so merry

but the ones who play the flutes are sad. Why are they sad, mother?"

THE MOTHER: "Perhaps they are waiting for their mothers, the flute songs will call them back. They are waiting for their mothers to bring them the pretty baskets."

THE CHILD: "Oh! yes, I can see them coming in the distance; the baskets are so large, but they have no flowers in them, they have toys and red fruits and so many green ribbons. The babies are smiling now. They haven't any wings, but their arms make music when they move and silver waves break over the branches; the waves are so pretty and all of the birds are white, they are flying toward the moon; the moon is set in a cloud of blue like your sapphire ring and there is only one star, and it is singing. When the clouds kiss the star it grows brighter and the silver turns into another color, a color I have never seen before. It is raining, too, but the rain drops are large and red. I think they break into rubies, as they fall to the ground. There is a cloud that sails over an emerald sea where the pink boats drift. There are young people in these boats. I didn't know there was a

sea in Heaven, mother, and a beach where the children played!"

THE MOTHER: "You are tired now, please don't talk any more, my little one!"

THE CHILD: "Oh! I must tell you what I see, and then I will rest. I see pansies and white daisies with purple centers. I see rose-buds and pink clouds. Why are they pink?"

THE MOTHER: "Because you love me and the love color is pink, therefore you attract it."

THE CHILD: "I don't understand that, mother, but my body seems to float. Is the room moving?"

THE MOTHER: "No, you are dreaming, dear."

THE CHILD: "No, mother, I am moving, I can see my own body lying in the room, but I am near the window now where the Bright Lady came in. Hold me, or I shall fall out."

THE MOTHER: "No, if you go out of the window you will not go down; if you will not fear, you will go up."

THE CHILD: "But I feel so light, my dress is made of rose-petals and of tulle. My slippers are of gold, my arms have doves on them,

and my head is encircled in blue. It is all so pretty and so strange. There are lotus buds and orchids, and my voice is changing into music. My words are going away from me."

THE MOTHER: "Whatever the changes they will be sweet to you, my dearest. So do not talk any more now but listen so that I will cheer you on your way to the Bright Lady. Go straight toward her, forget *me*. She is waiting to take you in one of the pink boats that you saw on the emerald sea; the fairy boat that is going toward the sun. When you reach there, don't look back here towards me, because if you do the boat will turn over. Just keep your gaze toward the sun and when you get there, I will be there. This you cannot understand, but sing me a morning song, and think in roses and I will come to you. Be careful what you think, because it is the *thinking that counts there*. Do you hear me, my little one? If you do not answer, I shall know that you are gone, I will not cry, and call you back to me. I will rejoice with you on the way. Always there will be bright candles burning for you. Christmas Carols will be sung out into the free air."

THE CHILD: "I am not afraid, mother, I *was* at first, but I am getting so near the bench where the children dance. The dancing has a perfume and each step brings a different flower. *I like the dancing, so.* I don't think I mind dying now that I can be merry; I thought it would be so sad."

THE MOTHER: "Yes, you will be dancing over daisies; the white ones with the purple centers. The daisy is a symbol. It means that the white part is your body, the purple is your soul. The white is the tenderness, the purple is the strength of you—— The meaning of the symbol is that there is something royal as well as tender in the death of a little child."

**THE ARTIST
AND THE MATERIALIST**

PART I

THE ARTIST AND THE MATERIALIST

"To be great is to be misunderstood."

—EMERSON.

PART I

(A Studio overlooking the Grand Canal. It is evening; two men are dining together. The Artist is in his painting costume, is tall, dark and impressive. The Materialist is conventionally attired. They are sitting vis-à-vis facing a large window where the lights from Lido are seen.)

THE MATERIALIST: "Let us have our coffee outside. The air is so heavy in here."

THE ARTIST: "Certainly, I did not know it mattered to you."

THE MATERIALIST: "What do you mean?"

THE ARTIST: "Well—you see—I——"

THE MATERIALIST: "What?"

THE ARTIST: "Oh! I thought perhaps it was too damp outside."

THE MATERIALIST: "Don't be polite, my friend. Tell me—what did you really think?"

THE ARTIST: "What I really thought?"

THE MATERIALIST: "Yes, go on, is it——?"

THE ARTIST: "Oh! that would be too personal and we might become involved in some unfortunate argument."

THE MATERIALIST: "Argument—well, let's have it. I like arguments, don't you?"

THE ARTIST: "No!"

THE MATERIALIST: "No? How strange, I thought that temperamental people liked arguments."

THE ARTIST: "Perhaps, but not artistic people. There is a difference, you know."

THE MATERIALIST: "Difference?"

THE ARTIST: "Temperament is a very badly misused word. The true artistic nature realizes that all discord or disharmony is disintegrating. The true artist is generally poised. The parvenus in Art are the temperamental ones, the poseurs. There is a definite

ARTIST AND THE MATERIALIST 137

intellectualism in harmony, in poise. There must be peace and silence for one to attain any true growth."

THE MATERIALIST: "You mean that one must be quiet? How stupid!"

THE ARTIST: "No, not quiet, in your sense of the word. Not inane or phlegmatic, but controlled, centered as it were, ready to receive."

THE MATERIALIST: "Dear me—that sounds metaphysical and I don't like metaphysics."

THE ARTIST (*thoughtlessly*): "Of course not."

THE MATERIALIST (*hastily*): "Why of course not?"

THE ARTIST (*getting up from his chair abruptly*): "Let's go out and smoke on the piazza. Let's not talk. I really don't like it, especially in this room. It is so magnetized."

THE MATERIALIST: "Magnetized, this room? How fantastic! You are a real artist, aren't you?"

THE ARTIST: "I don't know, but I do believe in atmosphere and that sort of thing, and I don't want any discord, anything to change the vibration here. I can't stand it. I believe

in vibration—in fact, I know it's a perfectly reasonable thing to believe that thoughts are things. The 'ether' becomes charged with thoughts and they vibrate incessantly, but let's not talk about it, I'd rather not."

THE MATERIALIST (*laughing*): "Well, I must confess I don't understand you or your kind. I enjoy the artistic temperament, without understanding it."

THE ARTIST: "That is because you have no intuition. You only understand the obvious in human nature."

THE MATERIALIST: "What is this intuition, this *something* you seem to understand so well?"

THE ARTIST: "Intuition is a psychic faculty, an instinct highly developed in some, while dormant in others. It is a subjective faculty and is only expressed by a sensitive."

THE MATERIALIST: "A sensitive, do you mean a medium?"

THE ARTIST: "Yes, in a certain sense of the word. I mean an individual sensitive enough to act as a means of expression for the subtle things of the soul."

THE MATERIALIST: "The *subtle* things of

the soul! Well, I'm sorry but I am afraid your knowledge does not find much sympathy with me. I am a *practical* 'nan!" (*Hurriedly*)

THE ARTIST: "Oh! don't say practical, please don't use that word. Every thick-skinned, coarse-fibred, commonplace man I know calls himself practical. It seems to be a general excuse for pure ignorance, for lack of culture. For true culture is more than education. It is pure thinking, fine living, a reverence for all things beautiful. Certainly no one admires common sense and practical efficiency more than I. It is the abuse that I dislike. The use of this word, practical. It always reminds me of the sordid, stupid people I have had the misfortune to know; whose only asset is that they are 'practical.' Only a month ago, one of these 'practical' creatures entered my studio fairly rooted to the earth by materialism. After talking for an hour about 'nothing' she calmly rose to go, saying, 'I'm sorry, but I will not continue my studies with you, I fear, I am much too practical for such things.' 'Yes, of course—of course,' I replied. 'Much too practical, madam, I agree with you.' Smiling and bowing in a manner

which reminded me of my cook, she disappeared, leaving a long trail of invisible hair pins she had dropped from her marcelled hair, which nestled over her painted cheeks in a most hideous way, and having about her some aroma, some horrible concoction, which could have been nothing less than that awful azurea! Back—back—I thought to the kitchen and washboard, for there you belong in spirit and in body. Go where you may reign supreme in your court, your practical sphere, taking an occasional peep in your next door neighbor's yard, which will enable you to discuss her saintly and enviable reputation."

THE MATERIALIST: "How dramatic you are. A mere incident of this kind disturbs you. You *are* temperamental, you see."

THE ARTIST (*rising from the table and walking around the room, finally faces the Materialist*): "I'm sick, I'm weary unto death of the abuse of words, sick of the people who use them, sick of the people to whom they apply. There is another word that annoys me as much as the word practical; it is the word *economy*. All of the stingy, mean, petty people I know pride themselves upon their econ-

ARTIST AND THE MATERIALIST 141

omy, their practical conservation. It is often used to conceal a small heart and infinite selfishness. There are two other words, nice and decent words so misused and abused. They are *morality* and *love*. All this prattling about morality that the diabolical old hypocrites like to dwell upon. And as for love, it is the most abused word in the English language. Every sordid passion is called love! Every sickly sentimental thing is called love. Emotionalists who speak of love are as far removed from a clean exalted sentiment as a mountain peak from the valley! The affectation in our modern society is disgusting, a society largely created by a *nouveau riche* element of dressed up servants."

THE MATERIALIST: "You are intolerant, my friend. You expect too much of human nature."

THE ARTIST: "You are mistaken. I do not expect too much. I expect only simplicity, more sincerity, less artifice."

THE MATERIALIST: "Then you dislike common people, as well as common things."

THE ARTIST: "No, I rather like them, but

in their place; not when they make themselves ridiculous with vulgar climbing towards a useless goal. I like my servants—in fact, I love them—but as servants. It is the eternal fitness of things that I want. Everything in nature is properly placed and every man should be so, too.”

THE MATERIALIST: “Oh! I see. I see, and yet I don’t quite understand. I am like a nocturn, without a pedal. I am harsh but I can see ahead and it seems to me that you dwell upon subjects that can easily be solved by a gradual evolution of the race. The lines of destiny cast their rays before them and it is plain to see that we are soon destined for a Renaissance. Until then, we must wait and make the best of our present existence. In the meantime, let us discuss that subject you mentioned last night—or was it a book, do you remember?”

THE ARTIST: “Oh! you mean DuMaurier’s ‘Peter Ibbetson,’ in which he speaks of dreaming true? I’m sure you would think it quite absurd. Why do you insist upon discussing subjects that are uncongenial?”

THE MATERIALIST: “Because I want to

ARTIST AND THE MATERIALIST 143

learn. Because I want you to tell me something."

THE ARTIST: "You are sarcastic, my friend."

THE MATERIALIST: "No, I am merely curious."

THE ARTIST: "Oh! well, I will tell you. There is a sleep known to sensitives, as it were, of the subconscious mind, that by certain training, the spiritual and physical become active and intelligent, revealing the future in the degree that subconscious revelations can register upon conscious mind. The subconscious mind being the universal mind, knows everything, but it is often handicapped through its alliance with the conscious mind, because the conscious mind is not prepared always to receive and retain the promptings of the subconscious mind, but so-called mediums and sensitives can, through their fine quality of mind, retain and reveal. Such people are called supernaturalists. Now, as a matter of fact, it is not a supernatural process but is perfectly natural, for the Infinite has given to men the dual minds. The subconscious mind often fails, because human beings

often use only their conscious faculties, but the means of developing or reviving the psychic faculties are very simple. Live close to nature in the strictest meaning of the word, but yet in the most normal. I mean, fresh air, simple diet, harmonious thoughts. Prayer, in the sense of aspiring toward idealism. Faith, in the sense of being positive, for faith places us in the realm of constructive forces and as God is mind, do you not see that the working hypothesis is simple and mathematical? Thus in reading the philosophy of the adepts, we find that they agree upon the first principles in the art of living. Faith, harmony and love, are the pass words."

THE MATERIALIST: "But if the adepts agree, then evidently no strides along these metaphysical lines have been made. It proves that no one can penetrate the 'Border-Land.' "

THE ARTIST: "On the contrary, it only proves that these great mystics from the time of Buddha, Jesus, Swedenborg, down to the beautiful Maeterlinck and to Tagore in arriving at the same conclusion have proven that there is a Law at work. A Law so steadily

lasting and simple that it cannot be changed or misunderstood by *great* men. Only by the short sighted, those blinded by egotism and materialism! A simple man on the path of life may possess more supreme wisdom than our most finished mental product, because to be thoroughly great, we must be simple—where we draw near to the infinite mother nature, where we do not strain our ears for harmony, we have but to touch these strong clear tones of life which bring forth at our bidding great major chords, the chords of the Universe.”

THE MATERIALIST (*thoughtfully*): “You seem very earnest. I believe you mean all of this. You think of many subjects, do you not?”

THE ARTIST: “I do think a great deal, and I am happy in doing so, for as I draw near to revelation the great mystic currents of life are made real; to me the infinite is made definite. I catch a glimpse, as it were, of the eternal whole. The great capital cause stands out in splendid truth against a background of materialism.”

THE MATERIALIST: “I understand, I under-

stand. But what does all this thinking lead to, this delving into the subtleties of being?"

THE ARTIST: "It leads to understanding. Where life is seen in a new and great form, it leads to attainment, to spiritual achievement."

THE MATERIALIST: "But you are living on the 'Border-Land,' the region visited by few finite beings, alone and insecure. (*The Artist walking toward the Materialist and putting his hand upon his shoulder, as a Priest might*)

THE ARTIST: "Insecure? How wrong you are! I stand upon the threshold of the supersensual ground where I may glance into the very heart of the infinite, bringing hope and courage, so that less daring individuals may be comforted. In the spiritual battle of existence, there are advance souls always straining their ears to catch the full melodies of the Infinite symphony; the music is sweet, the blending of major and minor chords so exquisite, so pregnant with occult law! Believe me, the symphony is beautiful, but only you do not hear, not because you are actually bad, but simply because you are—well—material. But let us dream a bit now, not in the

ARTIST AND THE MATERIALIST 147

foolish way. Let us lose ourselves in the beautiful." (*The Artist walking toward the piazza, stands overlooking the canal where the merry laugh of a Venetian girl echoes over the water and turning as though painfully reminded of someone, enters the studio*).

**THE ARTIST
AND THE MATERIALIST**

PART II

THE ARTIST AND THE MATERIALIST

PART II

(Two weeks later, a rainy, warm, but balmy day. The Artist is busily engaged in painting, There is a bright fire in the grate. There is a knock upon the door. The Artist speaks, without looking up, impetuously.)

THE ARTIST: "Come in—come in!" *(The door opens and the Materialist slowly enters the room)*

THE MATERIALIST: "Good morning!"

THE ARTIST: "Good morning." *(Without looking up)* "Just a minute—just a minute—sit down, I must finish this line."

THE MATERIALIST *(slowly)*: "Perhaps I came too soon. I'm sorry. Have a cigar."

THE ARTIST: "Cigar—while I'm painting? You have no imagination, my friend!"

THE MATERIALIST: "So you have told me before."

THE ARTIST: "Yes, but you know I didn't mean to be rude. I never wish to be discourteous. You know that, don't you?"

THE MATERIALIST: "Oh! of course, of course. I rather like your frankness and your enthusiasm. It is remarkable. (*Seating himself comfortably and yawning*) But why fire on such a warm morning, drying out the room or the painting?"

THE ARTISTS "Neither!" (*Painting, and pointing very hurriedly*)

THE MATERIALIST: "Then why the fire?"

THE ARTIST: "Now there you are again insisting upon knowing something that you will not understand, or if you do understand, it will bore you."

THE MATERIALIST: "Nothing you say could bore me." (*This with a tinge of sarcasm*)

THE ARTIST: "Thank you."

THE MATERIALIST: "Really, be patient, my friend. I am not so dull and unappreciative as you think. Now just to prove to you I was

thinking, perhaps you were a fire worshipper?" .

THE ARTIST: "Oh! brilliant, brilliant! That does take imagination!"

THE MATERIALIST (*throwing his cigar into the fire*): "Let us have our coffee now. (*Gazing quietly out of the window*) I am in no mood to argue with you to-day. I only want to listen to you. I like your point of view. You are not an extremist. You are neither orthodox nor atheistic. Either seem narrow to me. I am narrow because I am an atheist. I don't believe in anything, while you are at least rational and optimistic."

THE ARTIST: "If you are sincere in wanting to learn metaphysical things, do not listen to me. Find a better master. Read more, read a lot. I mean such books as these. (*Going to a table he lifts several volumes into his arms tenderly, affectionately, and walks toward the Materialist*) These, for instance."

THE MATERIALIST (*catching sight of the names, exclaims*): "Wilde! Balzac! Ingersoll! Why, you cannot mean that I must read these books. I thought you would suggest Tagore, Emerson or Maeterlinck—the

great mystics. I did not know you would read *these books*. Wilde was a cynic! Balzac a sensualist! Ingersoll an atheist!"

THE ARTIST (*smiling in a patronizing way and shaking his head as though intensely amused*): "That is not true, you are wrong, my friend! Have you read the 'De Profundis' by Wilde or Balzac's 'Louis Lambert' and Ingersoll at all? Perhaps you read Wilde's earliest works, Balzac's droll stories or 'The Country Doctor.' There is nothing in the whole of literature more profound than the 'De Profundis.' That is the only word that expresses this book. The conception of the Nazarene is perfect intellectually and spiritually. Wilde was one of our greatest mystics. The 'De Profundis' is a masterpiece. There is *gigantic* understanding in it, sorrow, humiliation and punishment are made intelligible and the teaching of Christ is made clear. If Wilde had possessed intellect without soul or *vice-versa*, the 'De Profundis' would be meaningless, but a perfect development of both in this book has proven him to be an adept in the sense of a perfect understanding of spiritual laws. No human mind

has surpassed Wilde in his 'De Profundis' in metaphysical grasp! Idle minds and superficial readers only know him as a playwright, but if they would read his 'De Profundis' seriously, they would *forget* his past, his name, his objective individuality and remember only his exquisite revelation in 'De Profundis,' which *should serve as the perfect message for the centuries to come!* Through the pages of this work one passes into a great realm of thought. One's own personal little ego is lost and one's soul is thrown upon a mental altitude which is so stupendous that self-forgetfulness is not only a virtue but a principle by which we attain the power to comprehend universal law."

THE MATERIALIST: "Oscar Wilde a mystic! Are you crazy? You cannot mean this. (*He slams the book on the table*) That is absurd. I admire Wilde's brilliancy, his color, his charm, but a mystic—never." (*He begins to laugh heartily*)

THE ARTIST: "Don't laugh, it isn't a joke. Ignorance is never funny. You are a superficial reader. You read one or two books of a writer and you judge him by those books, for-

getting the time, the environment, the age or possible development of the writer! You are like most so-called educated men. You have no *real* culture. You read the 'Bluebird' by Maeterlinck and call yourself a Maeterlinck scholar. You . . ."

THE MATERIALIST (*laughing*): "Still I refuse to get angry, even if I am really a materialist. This is too interesting, I would not lose a word of it!"

THE ARTIST: "Forgive me, but you do antagonize me. I cannot help being disagreeable."

THE MATERIALIST: "That's good, go on, I don't mind it a bit. You are dull when you are not antagonized."

THE ARTIST: "Thank you. We are too personal, you and I. It is a mistake. It is not polite."

THE MATERIALIST: "Polite! What does that matter? I want *facts*. Facts are the only things that count in this life!"

THE ARTIST (*as though speaking to himself, speaks rather pensively*): "Did you ever read 'Louis Lambert' or 'Seraphita' or the 'Magic Skin?' These are the books that

prove Balzac to be a mystic, even if his evolution was slow, and as for Ingersoll he was one all along only the Puritans and Scotch Presbyterians could not understand him. He lived in advance of the Age! . . .”

THE MATERIALIST (*changing the subject abruptly*): “What is the matter with modern fiction? There are many good writers, but there is often something lacking. I don’t know whether it is style or technique.”

THE ARTIST: “Two things are often lacking; things that few consider: rhythm and race. Yesterday I read a book in which the thought, the diction was splendid, but here and there were discords. I made up my mind to find out what the trouble was. I found that there was a lack of elegance, a certain patrician something, and that there was no sense of rhythm.”

THE MATERIALIST: “Rhythm—I thought you were reading prose.”

THE ARTIST: “I was, but there is a rhythm in prose, just as there is in poetry. I have been recently reading some ‘big little’ books. The ‘Road-Mender,’ by Michael Fairless, ‘The Garden of Survival,’ by Algernon

Blackwood, 'The Woolen Dress,' by Bordeaux, 'A Journey to Nature,' by Mowbray. It is a wise thing to read these 'big little' books; often so-called scholars have missed them while reading the purely conventional literature. The reader who is familiar with Shakespeare, with Plato and Aristotle, and has some knowledge of Plotinus, Kant, Darwin and Flammarion is apt to feel quite well read, yet one feels so sorry for them. It is like having them tell you that they never saw the sunshine or never heard Beethoven, that they are deaf or color blind. They are as barren as some orthodox Christians. They chill the heart and darken the mind."

THE MATERIALIST (*thoughtfully*): "Now tell me this. Why is it that so many people are not governed by the planets under which they are born? Does that not prove that there is nothing in astrology?"

THE ARTIST: "It is very simple and mathematical. Only *sensitive* people are influenced by their planets. I am sufficiently sensitive to respond; the vibrations reach me, while they cannot reach you. They are all about you, but there is no contact because you

are phlegmatic. A sensitive plate can register impressions, a phonograph record for instance, but a 'tin can' cannot; it only receives enough to make a rasping, discordant noise."

THE MATERIALIST (*laughing*): "To think that I should be likened to a tin can. This is perfectly delicious! What else am I like? A gourd, I presume, and you a beautiful Stradivarius?"

THE ARTIST: "Oh! not exactly. You are a materialist, but a delightful one, and very splendid in your way—only it is not my way. I am not superior—I am merely different."

THE MATERIALIST (*reminiscently*): "You love India so, I have been thinking, my friend, why don't you write a defense of India or the whole East, Persia, Chaldea, Egypt?"

THE ARTIST (*quickly*): "Thanks, that's a good idea—I will. I told you that you were helpful, even though materialistic."

THE MATERIALIST: "How gracious you are!"

THE ARTIST: "That is a race but not the kind you know about. I mean the aristocracy of the soul, this old soul of mine has reincarnated so often as a prince, a high priest or a

ruler, it never could be anything but courteous. It is a habit by this time."

THE MATERIALIST (*sarcastically*): "Then you were always something great—I see!"

THE ARTIST: "Oh, no! not great, merely fastidious. I was drawn by the law of attraction to the nice things of life! I loved color, warmth, luxury—the sensuous in art and women, and I found it in the 'Palace of the King!' Now I want Truth. The next time I shall be a peasant and live close to nature."

THE MATERIALIST: "Very stupid, you had better keep on the old trail, my boy!"

THE ARTIST (*thoughtfully*): "Have a cigarette."

THE MATERIALIST: "Thanks, that means you are tired of me."

THE ARTIST: "Oh, no! but my model is tired, she is weary of posing, of having me talk instead of painting her aquiline nose."

THE MATERIALIST: "I don't like anything aquiline in a woman, even if it is classic. I like the other extreme, I love Titian's Flora best of all paintings. She is an embodiment of color, warmth, curve and sensuous charm."

THE ARTIST: "Do you? I like Botticelli."

ARTIST AND THE MATERIALIST 161

THE MATERIALIST (*interrupting him*):
“Those long-nosed, long-faced, angular women? I abhor them! Your model is like them! Now I know why I never really liked her. Let’s talk about the fire, that interests me more than anything else.” (*Pushing his chair backwards as though uncomfortably warm*)

THE ARTIST: “The fire, my fire, I love it! It is my inspiration.”

THE MATERIALIST: “Inspiration, that’s a nice word!”

THE ARTIST: “Yes, it means just what the Cross *might* mean to you. It is a symbol.”

THE MATERIALIST: “But how could fire be a symbol? I do not understand.”

THE ARTIST: “Easily, quite naturally, it can be a symbol. A most potent symbol. (*He picks up one of his books and rapidly turns the pages*) Let me quote Wadia’s words to you. Those words from his splendid book, ‘The Message of Zoroaster,’ he says:

“‘Fire continuously changes the nature and constituent part of all objects that it comes in contact with. In its own nature and constituent it never changes but ever remains

the same, hence fire is eternal; a permanent symbol. It is a fitting emblem, *Divine Permanence.*' (*Closing his book as though thinking aloud*) The Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, Mexicans, Peruvians, all used fire as a symbol in some way, in churches or in national ceremonies, but always there was the spirit or personality of fire in these people."

THE MATERIALIST (*thoughtfully*): "Certainly there is a charm about fire. It is, in a measure, hypnotic."

THE ARTIST: "It is more than that; it is a great revealer, an occult force that commands the devotional nature of artistic minds. Minds sensitive and refined enough to see and feel beyond the temporal."

THE MATERIALIST: "The Orientals believe in transmutation, do they not?"

THE ARTIST: "Yes, they do. If that law could only be understood, so much latent power might be developed, for in the last analysis an emotional and imaginative nature is a part of the *Infinite Consciousness*. Emotionalism can be intellectualized and brought into practical fruition. When people feel emotional if they would only use their emo-

ARTIST AND THE MATERIALIST 163

tion in creative work, this Force that is engendered through the emotional nature would conserve itself instead of spending itself in a futile way. A very nice woman once said to me when I was painting her (I remember she insisted upon talking, but she said something, so I forgave her): 'Whenever I feel emotional, I immediately think of something pretty or I pick up a book and read a page or two. I always think of something beautiful and then instead of becoming hysterical I feel myself reaching out, as it were, for the fine things of life as a child grasping for butterflies which sometimes elude with subtle wings, yet later settle in the heart of a rose and gradually I feel strengthened and transformed. My mental perspective becomes clear and my spiritual vision broadened.' "

THE MATERIALIST: "Good idea I should say! But what introspection!"

THE ARTIST: "Certainly, but all individualism springs from introspection."

THE MATERIALIST: "Not necessarily. It may be inherited or simply the result of a keen mentality."

THE ARTIST: "I am not speaking of gen-

ius, but I am convinced that individualism springs from introspection. That so-called ego is more a virtue than a fault. That 'Know thyself' is a creed to be lived by. In every study we must become familiar with the technique or first principles, and so it is in human nature, the most interesting and important study of life. A little more meditation would not hurt the Western world. However, that is the great wisdom of the East."

THE MATERIALIST: "You are a thinker, but I think your sense of beauty is the thing that I like best about you—it is so helpful."

THE ARTIST: "There is no exaltation without beauty. Does not even a Puritan picture his Heaven as being beautiful? Is the demand for beauty not there? I once painted a beautiful woman who said seriously, 'I want to die before I grow old—I want always to be beautiful. I could not love God if I were not beautiful.' This might seem a vain thing to some, but to a real thinker it reveals a majestic truth, for would not the law of harmony demand that we should be beautiful, and worship our Creator in beauty as well as in

holiness? I have often thought perhaps that is why so many beautiful souls slip quickly into the great beyond, a great Nirvana to become absorbed in a fitting atmosphere going in the fullness of their fresh loveliness, or it may be the law of attraction, the magnetic call to these souls to a more Etheric sphere of beauty! . . . Beauty brings illumination of mind and ecstasy of soul. It is like tuning a violin to a higher pitch. One feels oneself suddenly thrown upon another plane where certain great major tones mingle with minor strains, evolving into some strange occult symphony,—a symphony of prophetic dreams where one catches a glimpse of the future and understanding of the past—and courage for the present! Personally, I love beauty so keenly that I am trying to be an Adept. I want to master all metaphysical possibilities. I want to dwell with the souls I love, even while I am in the earth life. I want to develop my spiritual self so keenly, that I may journey on to the Etheric world in the deep silence of the night to the banquet hall of the immortals. Swedenborg and Tennyson did this, Balzac and Bulwer Lytton, the Indian Adepts,

many Mystic Saints and the simple 'Road-menders' on the walk of life."

THE MATERIALIST: "Would you do this in some mechanical way or through long periods of fasting and prayer, a journey to nature as it were, as through stolid patience where deep purple shadows would darken the way—with only the twilight to guide you—to find disappointment or utter nothingness——?"

THE ARTIST: "I might answer you at great length, but I shall answer you in the words of Sir Oliver Lodge: *Love* bridges the chasm between the mortal and Spiritual Worlds."

THE MATERIALIST: "Love—then you must love something? Well, I don't love God, I detest my neighbors—and the only woman I ever loved left me—I could not approach the chasm. . . ."

THE ARTIST: "My friend, let's not think of that! Listen to the music, see the lights—they will tell you more than I. . . . The lights are just beginning to peep over the water in this beautiful City of Delight! Hear that music—that particular quality of voice which is so uniquely Italian. See the graceful gondoliers! Feel the gentle rhythm of the water!

Imagine beautiful women and dark-eyed men! Old palaces standing as monuments of dignity; see those lights from Lido throwing soft shades into the sky! Can you hear the chimes from the cathedral ringing over the city? They make me feel that I am caught up into an ecstasy of keen, poignant joy, bringing the spirit of reverence for all things beautiful. I love Venice, Florence, Rome, every inch of Italy! Its splendid dignity, produced by a true aristocracy, art, history and romance—it is so complete! . . .

“When I first came to a hotel recently built by an American firm, the apartment assigned to me was stilted and modern and struck me as a bad sound wave, discordant and crude, making me realize the terrible newness of our modern life, its lack of tradition, its unrest and futile strife so far as happiness is concerned, and when statistics show us that we have so many neurasthenics as a result of our rapid life, does it not seem senseless that we should sacrifice dignity, manners, gentleness, *happiness*, to the demand of commercialism? The Egyptians achieved monumental attainments in scientific and practical lines, and

yet they had time to love—time to rest—time to think. And so it was in Greece and Ancient Rome! I remained only for dinner and hailed a gondola, telling him to take me to some old place where I might be in the real Venetian atmosphere, so it was that I came here to this place."

THE MATERIALIST: "You love Italy I see!"
(The night was glorious, the moon and stars looking as they only can look in Venice. The music, the rhythm, the whole city pulsating—vibrating with love and harmony.)

THE ARTIST: "Yes—I love it. Have you noticed how sympathetic the Italians are—how they live in love? That is why I like them! In traveling through Italy you catch the eye of your fellow traveler who may have a thousand faults but who possesses sentiment—warm and palpitating—making you feel that you may speak about things of the heart. I feel in Italy that beneath the reserve of the individual of position and prominence, there is sympathy of a romantic kind and I feel that beneath the exterior of the humbler class, there is the same quality of feeling. Everyone in Italy seems

refined to me. Sentiment inculcates gentleness, because of the tender element of it and with the exception of the cab-drivers in the streets, *I* never hear a crude word spoken throughout Italy. Sometimes there is excitement—strong and intense—but even as in their singing, they never offend; they are *impulsive*, of course, but there is something unique in their temperament. Particularly is this true of Venice. The gondoliers, the shop people, the servants—everyone—seem as if blended in some unseen but potent harmony which compels a certain sweetness of a permanent kind. Often these people tell me of their lines. They all have a love story to tell. Venice is one glorious Echo of Beauty, as though upon the community the gods themselves have smiled! . . .”

THE MATERIALIST (*going towards the door*): “Good-night—and thank you!”

THE ARTIST: “For what? A simple dinner and heated argument?”

THE MATERIALIST (*solemnly*): “Yes, for the argument as *you* call it, for the *Inspiration* as *I* shall remember it!” (*Bowing gracefully, he leaves the room*).

